

# The Academy

A Weekly Review of Literature and Life.

No. 1534. Established 1869.

28 September, 1901.

Price Threepence.

[Registered as a Newspaper.]

## The Literary Week.

THE *Letters of John Richard Green*, which will be published next month, have been edited and prepared for publication by Mr. Leslie Stephen. They form in reality a biography, since Mr. Stephen, while confining himself as far as possible to the employment of Green's own words, has furnished introductory narratives in explanation of Green's position during successive periods of his life. Information for this purpose has been supplied by Mrs. Green, who has supervised the whole work.

PAINTERS of "literary pictures" in search of a subject might consider the first meeting between Mr. George Meredith and Mr. Thomas Hardy. We are indebted to Mr. Edmund Gosse for the anecdote, who narrates it in a paper in the *International Monthly* called "The Historic Place of Mr. Meredith and Mr. Hardy":

The first novel which Mr. Hardy wrote has never been published and will never see the light. The name of it was *The Poor Man and the Lady*, and it was full of the revolutionary and anti-social extravagances which are native to the unripeness of a youth of genius. It happened by a strange and interesting coincidence that the "reader" for the publisher to whom this MS. was submitted happened to be no less a person than Mr. Meredith. He saw the rough power in the book, and he recommended it for publication. But he also sent for the young man, and with great courtesy and friendliness urged him to consider whether it would not be wise to adopt, on his first introduction to the public, a gentler guise. The result was that Mr. Hardy asked leave to suppress *The Poor Man and the Lady*, and retired to write *Desperate Remedies*.

MR. KIPLING's new story, *Kim*, which is as long, if not longer, than *Captains Courageous*, will be published next Thursday. It is skilfully illustrated by Mr. Lockwood Kipling. The father of Kim, the hero, was an Irish soldier, but Kim was brought up as a poor white among natives in Lahore. Loafing there as a street arab of wide experience, and already known as "Friend of all the world," he meets a lama from Tibet who is on a pilgrimage to the Buddhistic River of Healing, where he hopes to be able to escape from the Wheel of Life. Kim accompanies him as *chela*. The account of the life by the Great Trunk Road, from the plains to the highest hills, gives Mr. Kipling the finest opportunity he has yet found to show shifting phases of Indian life, man and woman, priest and soldier, Hindu and Mohammedan, native and European.

A NEW novel by Mr. G. W. Cable may be expected this autumn. The hero of the story is Ned Ferry, the chief of Confederate scouts, and the heroine is a Confederate newspaper correspondent who was of great service to the leaders by furnishing them with valuable information.

OF the French edition of Dmitri Merejkowski's *The Death of the Gods*, which we reviewed last week, twenty editions have been sold. In preparing the work, Merejkowski visited all the spots where the hero of his romance had lived and made history. He followed the footsteps of

the Emperor Julian through Asia Minor and Greece, and throughout the whole of France and Germany. In preparing the second volume of the trilogy—namely, *The Re-awakening of the Gods*, of which work Leonardo da Vinci is the hero—Merejkowski visited and stayed in all the towns in which Leonardo had lived, from the village of Vinci to Amboise. He has studied in the same thorough manner for the third and final volume, *The Anti-Christ*, the character and wanderings of Peter the Great.

A CORRESPONDENT writes: Please cordially thank the writer of the articles on style for this last, so timely and illuminant, on the "glittering," and ask him to tell us more. For instance, is there anything in literary style and stylisms which at some period in the man or the language reaches its meridian, passes, declines into the dark? anything of self-will, vanity, incapableness, or inherent decay (decadent), as with the pear or the peach, which come slowly to their moment of perfection, and then—tend to rottenness? As, for example, not quite explicably, in prose with George Meredith, or Carlyle (compare his essay on Burns with "Shooting Niagara"), or Pater; and in poetry with Robert Browning. In architecture also: take the Gothic. Has not Amiens Cathedral reached the summit, slightly exceeding and toppling over from perfection? and is not Milan, with all its glory, partly a decay? our own Norman, too, passing into perpendicular, decorated, flamboyant, and then losing itself? Do the arts of sculpture and painting hint at the same advance from ripeness to decay? Where is the Greek grace of form, the middle Italian loveliness of grouping and tint? And the nations—do we find the like law there? Get someone to work out this aspect of the problem for us.

MR. PINERO's new play, "Iris," at the Garrick Theatre, is a stern lesson to the writers of sentimental novels and gallery-truckling dramas. Few, very few, authors show Mr. Pinero's courage—the courage of forcing a character to be consistent to the end. The treatment of Iris in the last act by Maldonado and Trenwith, may harrow the pitying and sympathetic heart, but to the judicial observer of life, unmoved by sentimental considerations, their behaviour is natural. Mr. Pinero also shows another form of courage in this remarkable drama of modern life. He is content to hold his hand, at any rate in the first two acts, to allow the action to unfold itself quietly, even a little tediously, while preparing for the tragic crises of Acts III. and IV. The finale may almost be described by the much-abused word awful, but who can say that it is anything else but true to the facts of human nature? We need not despair of the stage while there are such brains and temperaments as Mr. Pinero's to work for it. The writing is never forced. Small witticisms, mild epigrams fall naturally, and it is not Mr. Pinero's fault that the audience should laugh loudly at "England, land of lean women and snug men," or "A financier is a pawnbroker with imagination." It is refreshing to hear across the footlights such a reflection as, "Sorrow and remorse have their egotism as ease and joy." "Iris" is a play to see, and to remember.

In the October *Fortnightly* Mr. Nowell Smith writes on "The Popularity of Criticism" in a shrewd and interesting way. He conceives literary criticism—books about books—to be really a superior form of gossip. Moreover: "Literary criticism has this further advantage over other gossips, that its personalities are current coin for so many. A literary *causerie* cannot, of course, have the intensity of the gossip of two housewives discussing the lady who lives between them; but then anyone, *litteratus imbutus*, can partake of it. So far are books from being 'absolutely dead things,' that they are better evidence of the existence of their authors than exists for that of almost any human beings outside of the scope of our immediate senses." That literary criticism does not lack the spice of malice which is deemed necessary to the success of more worldly gossip is shown in Mr. Smith's own remarks on that much-whipped horse, Prof. Saintsbury's style. He contends, as many have contended, that Prof. Saintsbury's always weighty opinions would have more acceptance if they were expressed in a less "atrocious" style—a style which he declares must be deliberately affected:

He is constantly playing with more or less jocular allusions like the following (p. 410):—"Claudian . . . receives praise for his praise of Stilicho, and Dares (as we expect with resignation) for his 'veracity'; indeed, the clerestories toward that south-north are quite as lustrous as ebony." This is all very well occasionally, though the allusions are, it must be confessed, often too obscure for the ordinary reader; but constant repetition of the trick is none the more excusable because it is a well-known pit-fall for the "man of letters." And Prof. Saintsbury's unflagging jocularly is most oppressive. "In fact, those to whom the woman who killed Abimelech with a stone or slate is the patron saint of criticism." . . . (p. 464): "But the carnal man cannot help sighing for a tractate—a tractate even of the tiniest—on English verse, from the Venerable One" (p. 403): such *ἀνωγειμαῖα*, scarcely at home outside the sporting papers, may occasionally visit the sleepy lecture-room, but are only irritating when set down solemnly in the black and white of a substantial volume. And the Professor's diction, his structure of sentences, if not his mere formal syntax, are such that one wonders how a lover of literature could write as he does, or could expect lovers of literature to read him without constant disgust.

The question occurs to us, however, How long is it worth while to go on baiting a writer about his style? The style is the man, and when the man is well in years, neither the one nor the other is likely to undergo much change. Prof. Saintsbury's good qualities are many and most valuable; ought we not to rest contented with the all he can give?

DR. CONAN DOYLE hopes to get out a new edition of his history of the Boer War very soon. In it he will include all operations up to the second year of the war. Since the first edition appeared Dr. Doyle has remained a close student of events, and has had many officers' letters and diaries from the front through his hands. Meanwhile he has been talking to a representative of the *Daily Express* on the future of the war. He contends that the thing to be done is to capture the Boer Government on the principle that a serpent should be attacked on its head, not chopped about at its tail-end. And his recipe is this:

To capture them, one should choose 3,000 of the lightest and hardiest men in the Army, give them 6,000 of the best horses, one led horse for every man; no guns, no baggage, and a young leader, Plumer or De Lisle for choice. Let them loose with a free hand, and help them by stopping the drifts. Let them follow their chase across Africa if necessary, but let them ride it down at last.

We note, by the way, that Dr. Doyle shares our dislike of the use of sporting terms in despatches.

WHAT should be done to put down pernicious literature? Some sensible remarks on this subject fell from the lips of

Mr. Stephen Wigney, secretary of the Metropolitan Tabernacle Colportage Association, the other day, in a chat with an interviewer. Mr. Wigney does not believe in denunciation. His word is substitution. His colporteurs, numbering between fifty and sixty, manage to turn over more than £5,000 a year in selling books of distinctly moral and religious tendencies. Their aim is to offer good literature in the place of bad. The selection of such literature must be a difficult task. How compete with the penny dreadful? Mr. Wigney confessed, "It is very difficult indeed," and added:

I sometimes spend hours skimming books and periodicals to decide if we can admit them to our list. Of course I have always the Committee, with Pastor Thomas Spurgeon as president, to refer to. Yes, it is delicate and difficult to know where to draw the line.

In publications for boys I object to slang and vulgar language. The characters, while adventurous, should always be animated by a noble spirit. Such books need not be always preaching, but they should breathe a pure atmosphere. I know that a boy can and does enjoy such a book as *John Halifax, Gentleman*. We have sold numbers of that book very cheaply. We can now sell for three-pence such books as *Queechy*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and the *Wide, Wide World*. Speaking metaphorically, they will go on selling as long as the world lasts. A very nice book for the family is *Ministering Children*, which we can sell for threepence, in paper covers. I like the Tract Society's publications, also some of Cassell's, such as the *Quiver*.

A *Daily News* leader-writer wrote breezily on Elizabeth Barrett Browning last Tuesday. While hailing her as a great poet, the writer does not spare her extravagances. Thus:

Such a couplet as—

"Our Euripides, the human,  
With his dropping of warm tears,"

gives to most of us a sickly and nauseous sensation. Nothing can be well conceived more ridiculous than Euripides going about dropping tears with a loud splash and Mrs. Browning coming after him with a thermometer.

And again:

The great curse of the Elizabethans is upon her, that she cannot leave anything alone, she cannot write a single line without a conceit:

"And the eyes of the peacock fans  
Wioked at the alien glory,"

she said of the Papal fans in the presence of the Italian tricolour.

The writer contends, however, that Mrs. Browning's failures are failures of power, not of weakness:

This is the great and dominant characteristic of Mrs. Browning, that she was significant alike in failure and success. Just as every marriage in the world, good or bad, is a marriage, dramatic, irrevocable, and big with coming events, so every one of her wild weddings between alien ideas is an accomplished fact which produces a certain effect on the imagination, which has for good or evil become part and parcel of our mental vision for ever. She gives the reader the impression that she never declined a fancy, just as some gentlemen of the eighteenth century never declined a duel. When she fell it was always because she missed the foothold, never because she fumbled the leap.

She did not funk the leap, and occasionally came a cropper. Well, the argument is good if the language is free, and it is well that this aspect of the "glittering style" should be considered. Unfortunately the opportunities for considering it are few.

THE *Daily News* has published an interesting article by Signor Ugo Ojetti, on Mr. Caine's *The Eterna, City*. Signor Ojetti is an Italian writer, whose knowledge and point of view give his judgment more than ordinary weight. While granting to Mr. Caine's story "many qualities of emotion and conviction," he says that it



is "logically an anachronism, because it places men like Pope Leo X. and David Rossi, who are at best men of some remote future, in the contemporaneous atmosphere of to-day." The writer points out that an Anarchist, and particularly a Christian Anarchist, is an impossibility in the Italian Parliament, and he proceeds to show how Mr. Caine has utterly failed to grasp either the social or political life of Rome:

The Italian Government appears in *The Eternal City* more corrupt than that of Turkey; spies and delators—the masters of public affairs; Deputies reduced to such baseness that after the Speech from the Throne they rush to the public lottery; the postal service so foolishly administered that Donna Roma's letters to David Rossi end in the hands of the Pope; the Home Minister a brigand who introduces false letters into a public trial, decides the state of siege in the capital of the kingdom, and discusses it in the presence of his mistress with the highest officers of the State, treats the King as a school-master would not treat a pupil of ten years of age, and then unceremoniously sends a note to the Vatican to the Pope; the police, so good that they do not sequester the *Sunrise* even when it contains the famous revolutionary Lord's Prayer, do not search the house where the Prime Minister is killed, so that a paper which would alone reveal the true assassin is found by the English Ambassador; and, lastly, our King, timid, a fool, in weak health, who goes secretly to recommend himself on his knees to the Pope to be saved from a supposed Anarchist attempt, creates a rascal Dictator, and on his death abdicates, sighing, "Who will govern now?"

As regards the King, although the Socialists and Republicans may think it necessary to-day or in the future to depose him, no one of them doubts his iron character, his vast culture, his liberal views, the seriousness of his work, his will to do and not only to speak, his immaculate honesty, and the acuteness with which he judges men.

This, I say, as an Italian and as a Roman.

To this Mr. Hall Caine replied at length, and with his usual spirit, in the *Daily News* of last Tuesday. The passage in his reply which fits the above remarks of Signor Ojetti is as follows:

If it had been my purpose to impeach the Government of Italy, it is not offences of general application, but, more particular, corruptions, I should have spoken of. I should have spoken of the corruptions which led to the failures of your banks; of your trusts; of your subsidised mail ships which carry no mails; of your Mafia, of your Camorra; of your Press Laws; of your Parliamentary system which is broken up into countless groups and hundreds of office-seekers, each playing for his own hand, and making a staple government of your country difficult or impossible. I should have balanced this picture of the Rome of Monte Citorio by a picture of the Rome of the Vatican, with Roman priests neglecting their pastoral duties while their Holy Head holds gorgeous ceremonials and discourses on Temporal Power. I should have depicted the bad system of your police, which is vitiating the foundations of justice. I should have told a story like that of your Acciarito case, wherein the man condemned for life for an attempt to assassinate King Humbert was neither hanged, as he would be in some countries, nor shot, as he would be in others, but tortured in his cell at Santo Stefano by sham prisoners, warders, superintendents, and directors, who forged letters, created children, and employed all the machinery of bad drama to obtain the denunciation of innocent men. I should have . . .

Space forbids us to quote more of Mr. Caine's cumulative defence, a controversy of which the importance is so doubtful.

A WRITER in the *Westminster Gazette* has discovered humour in an unexpected place—the Official Guide to the Church Congress at Brighton. The editor of the Guide, wherever possible, has worked in quotations "to enliven leisure moments during dull speeches." These quotations are, he says, "largely from the works of the late Mr. William

Shakespeare, of Stratford-on-Avon." Here are some extracts from the Guide:

The vice-presidents of the Congress it describes as "Reverend Fathers and well-learned Bishops" ("Richard III."), the general committee as "Doing nothing, with a deal of skill" (Cowper), the executive committee as "A little group of wise heads" (Ruskin). Of the reception committee it says they "find you out a bed" ("Midsummer Night's Dream"), and refers to the executive officers in Pope's words: "Fire in each eye and papers in each hand," and to Mr. Chambers himself, as Editor: "Contented, that he lopped a branch" ("Henry VI., Part III."). Even the time-tables are not sacred. "How poor are they that have not patience" ("Othello"), "Who hath brought the fatal engine in?" ("Titus Andronicus"), "Stir not until the signal" ("Julius Caesar"), "She sat like Patience on a dress basket" ("Twelfth Night"), improved version, are quotations decorating the extracts from Bradshaw; and to a footnote, "Connexion at Havant uncertain," is added: "Patient, though sorely tried" (Longfellow). The cycling visitors are warned: "Better go on foot than ride and fall" (Middleton).

WE have noted some curious dedications. In his newly-published book of papers entitled *Likewise the Younger Women* (Grant Richards), the Venerable Archdeacon Sinclair inscribes these religious papers as follows:

TO THE  
MOTHERS' UNION  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND WOMEN'S HELP SOCIETY  
GIRLS' FRIENDLY SOCIETY  
METROPOLITAN ASSOCIATION FOR BEFRIENDING  
YOUNG SERVANTS  
YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION  
AND  
LONDON DIOCESAN SOCIETY FOR YOUNG WOMEN  
THESE PAGES ARE DEDICATED  
WITH ALL BEST WISHES FOR  
THEIR ADMIRABLE WORK

THE play on the subject of *Francesca da Rimini*, which Mr. Marion Crawford has written for Madame Sarah Bernhardt, was originally written in English. A rough French version, which the author read to Madame Bernhardt, was made by Mr. Crawford himself, but the actual version to be played will be made by Monsieur Marcel Schwob. This version is merely to be an accurate translation, and does not raise M. Schwob into the position of a collaborator. Mr. Crawford has gathered the material for his play from the true story of *Francesca da Rimini*, and he believes that he has discovered the actual room in which Francesca was murdered.

IT cannot be said that there is no market for occasional verse while such publications as the *Smart Set* are with us. The latest issue contains no less than twenty-eight poems or verselets, and we have taken the trouble to count them.

TO the American *Bookman* Dr. Robertson Nicoll, who is always a close observer of journalistic tendencies, communicates his views on the future of the halfpenny newspaper in connection with the recent striking provincial developments of the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express*. Referring to Mr. Harmsworth's untiring enterprise, he says:

I have good reason to believe that Mr. Harmsworth's plans were on a larger scale than he has yet been able to carry out. It was proposed to purchase the *Times*, and to sell it at a penny. If the proposal had been carried through, no doubt a great company would have been formed for the purchase and publication of the *Times* and the *Daily Mail*, and such a combination would have been most formidable. With us, however, the halfpenny press at its present size must have limits. It is a small eight-

page journal, and cannot give anything in very full detail. For example, it could not report the meetings of the Manchester Town Council or give the commercial news which Manchester men require. My own belief is that its development is only beginning, that instead of receiving as at present a small sheet for a halfpenny we shall receive as much as is now given in a penny paper, the additional cost being made up by additional advertisements. Certainly much money will be lost before all is ended, and perhaps some money may be won.

FROM the annual report of the Public Libraries Committee for the Borough of Finsbury we take the following table of books issued to readers :

Science and Art ... ..	11,510
Social Science and Theology ... ..	3,119
History, Travel, Biography ... ..	9,531
Language and Literature ... ..	1,842
Poetry and Drama ... ..	990
Prose Fiction and Juvenile ... ..	83,435
Miscellaneous ... ..	5,868

It will be seen that out of a total of 116,295 two-thirds were "fiction and juvenile." The lumping together of "fiction and juvenile" may, perhaps, be taken as an expression of the Committee's mild disapprobation.

THE historical romance, which Mr. Howells, amongst many others, considered some time ago to have had its day, appears, in America at least, to be continuing its triumphant course. We hear of such books selling by their hundreds of thousands, and the production is not stayed. A writer in *Harper's Weekly* tells of an American publisher who has ten or a dozen authors under contract to produce historical novels, which are to appear periodically during the next two or three years. Whether, before their production, the public will have grown tired of the "swashbuckler in literary opera-bouffe" is an interesting matter for speculation. We think they will, though we hardly agree with the writer of the article that the religious novel is likely to get the next "boom."

## Bibliographical.

THAT piquant actress, Miss Rosina Filippi, who has appeared so little on the stage since her marriage, appears desirous of a literary as well as a histrionic reputation. In 1895 she issued a small volume of *Dialogues and Scenes from the Novels of Jane Austen*, "arranged and adapted for drawing-room performance." In the preface to this she boldly asserted that Jane Austen "is essentially dramatic, and her characters assume shape, form, and colour; her plots are human, her people are alive. Her dialogues and scenes are complete in themselves." Since then Miss Filippi has given us a dramatisation of "Pride and Prejudice" (which, however, has not yet been published); and now she is announced as about to publish a play of Japanese life and character called "The Mirror." Some may remember that she made a very pleasant appearance, some little time ago, in the "Japanese" play called "The Moonlight Blossom."

A bibliographical interest attaches to the preface which Mr. Watts-Dunton has written for the three-and-sixpenny edition of his *Aylwin*—the "Snowdon" edition, as it is to be called, in recognition not only of the prominence given in the story to the famous mountain, but of the special acceptance which the book has met with at the hands of Welsh readers. In this preface the author quotes from an idyll which is to appear in his *New Poems*—an idyll recording the further adventures of Sinfu Lovell, Aylwin, and Winifred. The writer has also something to say about the "close portraiture" in fiction of persons known in real life, on which subject an utterance by Sir W. Besant is cited.

It is becoming quite the fashion for our bards, however young they may be, to issue an edition of their "collected poems." The latest to succumb to the temptation is Mr. Arthur Symons, who surely can look forward to a good many years of poetic effort. *Days and Nights* (1889), *Silhouettes* (1892), *London Nights* (1895), *Amoris Victima* (1897), *Images of Good and Evil* (1900)—these, I believe, represent all Mr. Symons's volumes of original verse up to now. Is it not a little early to "collect"? Perhaps what Mr. Symons really intends to do is to *sift*, to *select*—which is a very different thing, when you come to think of it.

With reference to the *History of Jests*, for which, the other day, I expressed a desire, an esteemed correspondent reminds me of Abraham Hayward's essay on "The Pearls and Mock Pearls of History," which is, of course, well known to me—as is also another thing to which he refers: Mr. Paley's little collection of "Greek Wit." There is, to be sure, the French work, *L'Esprit dans l'Histoire*; but I was thinking rather of our own history and jests, and wishing that the latter could be traced to their actual sources, instead of being ascribed indiscriminately to all sorts of people.

We shall all be glad to welcome the edition of Leigh Hunt's *Old Court Suburb*, which Mr. Austin Dobson is to supervise. It could not be in better hands. Meanwhile, the whole book is so far alive that Messrs. Hurst & Blackett thought it worth while to issue it, a little more than three years ago, in a half-crown shape. It will be remembered that an edition of Leigh Hunt's *The Town* was brought out by Messrs. Gibbings in 1893 at 12s. 6d.

There should be room for the monograph on Richard Hurrell Froude which Miss Louise Imogen Guiney proposes to bestow upon us. J. A. Froude's elder brother, R. H. Froude, is one of the "inheritors of unfulfilled renown." His character and work have not yet been popularised. He lives for scholars and theologians in Newman's *Apologia* and Mozley's *Reminiscences*; he also lives, more or less, in the volumes of his *Remains*, published in 1837 and 1839. J. A. Froude discoursed of him in the *Nineteenth Century* for 1879, but it is to be feared that to the average man and woman he is *nominis umbra*. He will be best remembered in connection with the *Lyra Apostolica* and the *Tracts for the Times*; but what mark can a man hope to make (if he is not a genius) who dies at the age of thirty-three?

A volume of selections from the verse of Dora Greenwell was included in the "Canterbury Poets" series in 1889. One of our publishing firms now intends to do the lady honour by making a fresh choice from among her rhythmical productions. She has a distinct, and no doubt lasting, place among the feminine meditative poets of whom Christina Rossetti is easily first. There are six volumes of verse to select from—those of 1848, 1850, 1861, 1869, 1873, and 1876. Miss Greenwell lived to a fairly good age (sixty-one), and is, perhaps, as well esteemed for her prose as for her verse, though neither is likely to obtain a permanent position in our literature.

I read somewhere of a forthcoming edition of the poems of Tennyson, in which use will be made of the pictorial illustrations contributed by Rossetti, Maclise, Millais, and Holman Hunt to the volume of 1857. This should be a real boon for Tennysonians. I did once possess the volume of 1857, but it has been "conveyed" from me by someone. In place of it, all I have is a copy of an American edition of Tennyson, in which all (or most of) the said illustrations were reproduced, with the most painfully inartistic results. A careful reproduction of the 1857 drawings would be a valuable possession.

Mr. Grant Richards does well to promise, in the issue of his "World's Classics," a reprint of Hazlitt's *Table Talk*. The book is, I believe, on Messrs. G. Bell's list, but of that I am not quite sure. Anyway, Mr. Richards's reproduction will be thoroughly acceptable.

THE BOOKWORM.



## Reviews.

## The Literature of Regret.

*A Vanished Arcadia: Being Some Account of the Jesuits in Paraguay, 1607 to 1767.* By R. B. Cunningham Graham. (Heinemann. 9s.)

And Huzzab shall be led away captive, she shall be brought up, and her maids shall lead her as with the voice of doves, tabering upon their breasts. . . . Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold: for there is none end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture. She is empty, and void, and waste: and the heart melteth, and the knees smite together, and much pain is in all loins, and the faces of them all gather blackness. Where is the dwelling of the lions, and the feeding-place of the young lions, where the lion, even the old lion, walked, and the lion's whelp, and none made them afraid?

Some such refrain as this pervades Mr. Graham's books, and we confess that we are greatly drawn to a writer who, in an age of Success, is consumed by these long and futile regrets. Consumed, did we say? But we are not sure of that. There is in Mr. Graham an interfused cynicism which throws doubt on the word. We do not gather his creed so as to define it. A democrat of democrats in his views of life, he is an aristocrat in thought and feeling. Moreover, he is a preacher whose incidental cleverness obscures the mission it recommends. There he and Mr. Bernard Shaw are in the same box.

Mr. Graham believes in the right of man to be happy, and he has travelled in Paraguay. Doubtless he believes in other things, and we know that he has travelled in other places, but this will serve. The right of man to be happy and undisturbed in a lowly and cheerful destiny is his favourite text; South America is the canvas on which he loves to embroider it. In his *Thirteen Stories*, published a year ago, we found Mr. Graham's heart going out to strange Brazilian, Uruguayan, and Paraguayan folk of thirty years ago—a people changed and changing; and to lost Gauchos, negroes, British wastrels, and the whole Spanish-Indian fringe of humanity in South America. He has wandered among this cheerful, unsuccessful humanity, and Europe cannot make him forget it. Hating plutocracies and disliking commerce in all its colossal forms, Mr. Graham loves the wandering, unachieving, easily satisfied peoples of the earth in whom gaiety, courtesy, and simplicity survive. So he has written this defence of the Jesuit rule in Paraguay between the years 1607 and 1767. He is probably under no delusions in the matter. He knows that the Jesuit régime could not by any possibility have continued much longer than it did. But he points out that it kept the Indian population going, and the clue to his book is found in these sentences:—"It has been nobly said that the extinction of the smallest animal is a far greater loss than if the works of all the Greeks had perished. How much the greater loss that of a type of man such as the Indians, whom the semi-communistic Jesuit government successfully preserved, sheltering them from the death-dealing breath of our cold northern life and its full, fell effects!" In this illogical-chivalrous strain the book is written. It is a brief for the Jesuits, not a history. It may be a true brief, but the tone is that of the advocate with a lump in his throat and a bitter jest on his lips. We really cannot take the book more seriously than Mr. Graham does himself, and he remarks: "*Historicus nascitur, non fit.* I am painfully aware that neither my calling nor election in this matter are the least sure. . . . I never took a note on any subject under heaven, nor kept a diary, by means of which, my youth departed and the countries I once knew so well transmogrified, I could, sitting beside the fire, read and enjoy the sadness of revisiting in my mind's eye scenes that I now remember indistinctly as in a dream." Thus it is that bad histories and good books are written. We do not call this a

bad history, but chiefly it is a good and flavoursome book—"a hotch-potch, salmagundi, olla podrida or sea-pie of sweet and bitter, with perhaps the bitter ruling most, as is the way when we unpack our reminiscences—yes, gentle and indulgent reader, that's the humour of it."

Mr. Graham had sight of his "vanished Arcadia" in 1876 after the war between Paraguay and Brazil, and much of the charm of the book lies in his descriptions of such relics of the Jesuit times as came under his view. The relics of a human society, be it a family or a tribe or a nation, have in them a profound pathos. For the individual we rightly care little unless he was our friend; but even a stranger cannot stand unmoved before a deserted mansion, or mingle without tears with the last weedy remnants of a fine race doomed beyond hope. Everywhere in Paraguay Mr. Graham seems to have asked himself, "Where is the dwelling-place of the lions and the feeding-place of the young lions?" Where walked the long procession of Indians going to their field labour at sunrise? They were led by the Jesuits bearing some saint aloft, and as the procession advanced to the sound of sacred music the Indians dropped off one by one to their work in the fields until at last the priest and the musicians and the acolyte returned alone to the village. But now—

On every side the powerful vegetation had covered up the fields. On ruined church and chapel, and on broken tower, the lianas climbed as if on trees, creeping up the belfries, and throwing great masses of scarlet and purple flowers out of the apertures where once were hung the bells. In the thick jungles a few half-wild cattle were still to be found. The vast *estancias*, where once the Jesuit branded two and three thousand calves a year, and from whence thousands of mules went forth to Chile and Bolivia, were all neglected. Horses were scarce and poor, crops few and indifferent, and the plantations made by the Jesuits of the tree (*Ilex Paraguayensis*) from which is made the *yerba maté* were all destroyed.

And this is the note of the book. It is suffused in regret for the vanished Arcadia, such as it was, in which the hard-working Jesuit priests sought to make the Indians good Christians and happy workers. It is certain that for nearly two centuries they maintained a form of government which, even if doomed to be swept away, did during that time enable generations of poor Indians to maintain their numbers in face of the white invasion, and live happily the while. The *estancias* and workshops were communistically managed, and payment for work and produce was made in food and cloth from the common stock. The arts of Europe were taught and practised, and the Indians, who, left to themselves, would have wandered from plain to plain, settled in the little townships (each ruled by two Jesuits), and made boats, tanned skins into leather, built carts, and printed books. Feast days and processions lent some pageantry to this quiet life, in which neither ambition nor despair had place. Mr. Graham is quite conscious of the instability which besets all such cheerfully stagnant systems. To such objections he has always some charming ineffectual reply. "One thing I am sure of—that the innocent delight of the poor Indian, Alfírez Real, mounted upon his horse, dressed in his motley, barefooted, and overshadowed by his gold-laced hat, was as entire as if he had eaten of all the fruits of all the trees of knowledge of his time." Or he philosophises like this:

In the eternal warfare between those who think that progress—which, to them, means tramways and electric light—is preferable to a quiet life of futile happiness of mind there is scant truce, so that readers have to take their choice whether to side with Funes or Azara in judging of the Jesuits' rule in Paraguay. There is no middle course between the old and new; no halting-place; no chink in which imagination can drive in its nail to stop the wheels of time; therefore, no doubt, the Jesuit commonwealth was doomed to disappear. But, for myself, I am glad that, five-and-twenty years ago, I saw the Indians who still lingered about the ruined *misiones* towns,

mumbling their maimed rites when the Angelus at eventide awoke the echoes of the encroaching woods, whilst screeching crowds of parrots and macaws hovered around the date-palms which in the plaza reared their slender heads, silent memorials of the departed Jesuits' rule.

Such regrets may be in vain, but when they are finely expressed and have some root in the writer's own memories they are good reading. They may also be illogical, but who will say that in this age of ruthless advance they are not medicinal?

Regret is not the only note of this book. Its ironic humour gives salt to its melancholy. Mr. Graham has great sport with the arch enemy of the Jesuits, Don Bernardino de Cardenas, Bishop of Paraguay. That worthy's crusade against the Jesuits is set forth in passages like this:

Preaching one day in the Cathedral, after the consecration, he turned towards the people, and, showing the holy wafer, said: "Do you believe, my brethren, that Jesus Christ is here?" All, being true believers, answered as one man that such was their belief. In the same way as at a scientific lecture, when the lecturer holds up some substance, and says, "You all know well that calcium tungstate or barium hydrocyanide has this or the other property," the hearers nod assent like sheep, being afraid to contradict so glib a statement from so eminent a man.

Then said Cardenas: "Believe as firmly that I have an order from the King to expel the Jesuits." The people all believed, and Cardenas forgot to tell them that by the expulsion of the Jesuits twenty thousand Indians would pass into his power, whom he could then distribute among his friends as slaves, as he proposed to divide the Indians of the missions among the Paraguayan notables to win them to his side.

Within some eight and twenty years of the expulsion of the Jesuits from Paraguay the Indians whom they had preserved (if only in political amber) were a nation scattered and peeled. They withered, says Mr. Graham bitterly, before "that competition which has made the whole world gray, reducing everything and everyone to the most base and common denominator," adding yet more bitterly:

The world, it would appear, is a vast class-room, and its Creator but a professor of political economy, apparently, unable to carry out his theories with effect. Therefore to us, the Western Europeans, he has turned for help, and upon us devolved the task of extirpating all those peoples upon whom he tried his 'prentice hand. On us he laid injunctions to increase at home, and to the happier portions of the world to carry death under the guise of life to those into whose lands we spread.

All of which is fair as far as it goes. Thus we all think at times. But are we not as helpless, we who ride the whirlwind, as those who perish beneath it?

### The Epistles of St. Paul Secundus.

*Passages from the Letters of Auguste Comte. Selected and Translated by John K. Ingram. (A. & C. Black, 3s. 6d.)*

EGOISM probably never made a more gigantic effort towards subjective immortality than in the case of the eccentric genius whose full name was Isidore Auguste Marie François Xavier Comte. He was a man who repaired by rebuilding. As we read the names of the new months he imposed upon the year—Moses, Homer, Aristotle, . . . (this month is Shakespeare, by the way)—we find ourselves unconsciously murmuring Moses Comte, Homer Comte, Aristotle Comte, although Comte, the Founder of the Universal Religion and the First High Priest of Humanity, is merely claimed by his eminent disciple, J. H. Bridges, as the successor of Aristotle and St. Paul.

The selection from letters to a dozen of his disciples now before us gives one a fundamental idea of the system which Lewes and Mill in Comte's opinion misrepresented and Harriet Martineau ably summarised. Uppermost in the

mind of the reader on closing the volume is Comte's mediæval regard for a submissive reverence. "No association can really exist without inequality," he remarks to Dr. Georges Audiffrent, whose Comte MSS. were placed at Dr. Ingram's disposal. The association he has in mind is Positivistic, though Positivists, he informs Henry Dix Hutton,

destined—as they are—to direct the world of our time, some by counsel, others by command, cannot fulfil their mission aright without a constant feeling of their mental and moral superiority

to "the individuals and classes which now oscillate empirically between retrogradation and anarchy."

It is the capacity for faith which is withdrawn by a habit of democratic irreverence. Therefore Protestantism, which crippled the priesthood and encouraged even inferior intellects to demand proofs of the statements of persons whose intellectual pre-eminence entitled them to the time-saving compliment of faith—Protestantism was obnoxious to him. In Roman Catholics he saw promising proselytes. He seems, indeed, to be borrowing from a Jesuitic defence of the saints as objects of supplication in the following passage:

Theologism, especially in its monotheistic form, has . . . developed the taste for absolute perfection which disposes to a disdain of the real affections as unworthy of such a contrast. But in the Positive state it is sufficient that the adored being, without being considered perfect, should be really superior to us, even though this superiority should be only partial, especially if it concerns the heart, as in the ordinary case of feminine types, who are the principal objects of personal worship.

In this passage we have a rationale for the homage which distributes itself in a pantheon; and its excellent common-sense contains the germ of Positivistic mysticism—the adoration of Space, Earth, and Humanity. The mysticism is the climax of Positivism, and, as in all philosophies, its exposure, its catastrophe. It would be strange if it were not, for the life of Comte is not that of a well-balanced being. It is not a well-balanced boy who composes a letter categorically forbidding a professor from entering his school. It is not a well-balanced man who marries a registered *fille de joie*, and who at least twice attempts suicide. A man of amazing information, a prodigy, Comte certainly was; but we are of opinion that it was his versatility and his suspicious and industrious egoism which made him a philosopher. Vindictive one might also suppose that egoism to be; for it might well wish to avenge his self-threatenings and that trying period of self-sinking when he collaborated with Claude Henri, Comte de Saint Simon, the voluminously incoherent father of French Socialism.

The megalomania which is distinctive of rational thought, and consequently of philosophy, is most striking when Clotilde de Vaux enters his life. In 1844 he informed Miss Austin (Ranke's translator) that she was the only lady of intellectual ability "in whom I have had the happiness of seeing moral delicacy united with mental elevation." The compliment was just in time; a year later he met the incomparable Clotilde. Derelict wife of a "lifer," the tragedy of her marriage must have powerfully suggested his own. Gruber, Comte's German biographer, is sceptical of the uncarnality of his attachment for her; but an interesting passage in a letter to Henry Edger, the leading American Positivist (March 27, 1856)—a passage omitted by Dr. Ingram—has convinced us to the contrary. In that passage Comte seems to indicate that he had wholly surmounted his sensual nature at or soon after the age of thirty. Now, he first met Clotilde de Vaux in 1845, when he was forty-seven. We therefore accept his famous friendship as idealistic, and willingly admire such a tribute as the following in a letter to Dr. Audiffrent (May 23, 1857):

I have been of late perfectly assured [on the final judgment of Posterity regarding Clotilde de Vaux] by recognising that her moral glorification is irrevocably



bound up with the intellectual conviction of the immense superiority of my *Politique* over my *Philosophie*. In order better to measure this decisive superiority, I have read during the last few days the best part of the *Philosophie Positive*—namely, the last three chapters. . . . Besides their moral dryness, which made me read immediately a canto of Ariosto to restore my tone, I profoundly felt their mental inferiority in relation to the true philosophic point of view at which the heart has completely established me.

Unfortunately Clotilde de Naux was not merely for Comte an influence; she was the "mother of his second life" and the "positivist virgin." These are expressions which indicate that, though he might eliminate Christ from a world remoulded to Positivism, he had a notion that he would not look ill himself in that seamless robe for which Roman soldiers cast lots. He confides to Henry Edger (April 3, 1857) the following "secret hope," omitted by Dr. Ingram. After remarking that Holy Week recalls him every year to the principal catastrophe of his private life, he adds:

C'est encore au Dimanche des Rameaux qui doit après-demain survenir le fatal anniversaire où commence l'éternité subjective désormais assurée à l'angelique inspiratrice de la religion positive. Mes intimes tableaux de la douloureuse semaine ainsi terminée, quand je les aurai suffisamment publiés dans la biographie promise pour 1864, seront peut-être destinés à doter nos successeurs d'une commémoration annuelle mieux méritée que celle dont nos prédécesseurs honorent la Passion chimérique du prétendu fondateur du Catholicisme.

That is a passage whose itch for imitation almost justifies the lines of Mortimer Collins, which record that positivism came in when tails went out.

And yet it was a great man who died in the rue Monsieur-le-Prince at Paris forty-four years ago. Though one is sorry that he knew his own greatness so much more accurately than his weakness, there is undoubtedly something Messianic in his voice, even the voice that calls war a transitory accident, and advises us to evacuate Gibraltar. It was no *uebermensch* that, under the benediction of nine new sacraments, sped the altruist on the way to incorporate himself in the *Grand Être*. But, and we say it with Carlylean intention and intensity, it was a man.

### Galopaud's Goose.

*War Notes: The Diary of Colonel de Villebois-Mareuil, from November 24, 1899, to March 7, 1900. With a Preface by E. M. de Vogüé. (A. & C. Black. 5s)*

THE traditional soldier whose heart is on the battlefield as the traditional sailor's is on the sea is still a son of France. The nomenclature of war remains French. Yet France produces soldiers whose ambitions she cannot satisfy—soldiers who cannot bear her defeats and find little scope in her enterprises. Such a man was the brave Colonel de Villebois-Mareuil, who fought against us in the present Boer War, and, refusing to surrender, was shot on April 5 of last year while conducting a reconnaissance of Lord Methuen's position at Boshof.

This record, consisting of his diary in South Africa and an introduction by M. Vogüé, of the Académie Française, is less important than interesting. It is French in every line, and an Englishman experiences that curious mixture of admiration and astonishment which French sentiment and French actions so often inspire.

It is particularly interesting to have M. Vogüé's word that Villebois-Mareuil was a disappointed French soldier. The disasters of the French arms in 1870, and not less the gradual conversion of "that mystic family, the army," into a "good citizen guard," embittered the young officer who had taken up the sword with the reverence of a priest taking orders. He resigned, and tried literature and

politics. But his hand still felt for his sword, and "when the African Vendée [note the phrase] presented to all who were free and devoted the attraction of a noble cause to be served, he felt it quiver." The unemployed soldier of France, the Othello-like lover of glorious war, went forth to fight with and for the Boer. "He took the cross," says M. Vogüé—"that is the phrase we must ever use in speaking of men of this lineage"—and of such he adds:

They still answer, after so many centuries, to the call of ancestors who went to the Holy Sepulchre. Their modern crusades have changed in name and in object; they go to emancipate America with La Fayette, to liberate Greece with Fabvier, to defend the Boers with Villebois-Mareuil. . . . Alas! the same disillusionment everywhere awaits them. It is apparent on every page of the Colonel's diary.

The hero weeping is of all figures dear to the French imagination. But, then, their way of putting things! Villebois-Mareuil was a brave man, that is certain, and we think that Lord Methuen's special recognition of his chivalry might have been noted at the end of this volume. Looked at in another way, Villebois-Mareuil's enterprise was ridiculous. Of all men he, the polished French soldier—an academician of war, so to speak—was least likely to be helpful to the Boers. And he was not helpful. He advised and implored in vain. He was beside himself with grief at the slow workings of the Boer mind and its enslavement to fatal habits. He could not bring home to the Boers certain principles of war; in vain he entreated them to do that little more and to be that little braver which might again and again have wrought havoc on our side.

With true literary instinct M. Vogüé fastens on the manner in which Villebois-Mareuil spent his Christmas on the veldt as typical of his illusion. He whose dearest memories were of the struggle with Germany, he whose dearest wish had been for the revenge which his country had deferred or forgotten, he who had accepted the Boer cause as a last hope of proving himself the perfect soldier, spent Christmas night drinking champagne with German officers. We turn to the diary and read: "The German officers invited us yesterday evening to drink champagne, Braun saying that, at the anniversary of the Christian era, Christian officers could not but unite confraternally. The conversation was very cordial, and I returned the invitation by asking them to dine with us this evening on Galopaud's goose." There follows a humorous digression on the death of Galopaud's unpaid-for goose, and then—the feast, and the skeleton at the feast. For while he disengaged the merry-thought it was borne in on Villebois-Mareuil that the irony of life had brought him and his companions into a curious position. "Between the Boers and ourselves there is the irreconcilable barrier of another religious cult, and between the comrades of the same military cult—drawn together through their isolation as foreigners—is the bitter recollection of a mutilated fatherland." Could the isolation, the homelessness, of the old-world traditional soldier, pure and simple, in the world of to-day be more vividly exemplified? The bones of Villebois-Mareuil's career were that night picked even cleaner than those of Galopaud's goose. But he was a brave man.

### The Latest Follower.

*Boshtan Ballads: Flotsam from the Isis, and Other Verses. By Lionel F. Begbie. (Oxford: Alden; London: Simpkin, Marshall. 2s. 6d. net.)*

MR. BEGBIE is the latest follower in the track of Præd, Calverley, Seaman, "J. K. S.," and the line of light poets who have sprung from the Universities. But we cannot say that he bears undimmed the torch which has been passed on to him. The fun is boisterous and obvious, not

to say puerile in many cases: there is little of the classic culture, neatness, and dexterity in style—nothing of the refined and arrowy humour—for which we have learned to look in verse of this kind. Perhaps "Thoughts on Moderations" is as favourable a specimen as we can find. It is quieter and less exaggerated, with something, at least, of the note we have come to think traditional in verse from Oxford and Cambridge:

Spring! and the doomed of Spring's exams,  
Lamblike, find solace in their Dams;  
Remorseless Moderators now  
Seek Deltas whereupon to plough,  
As swains beside the Nile;  
Now waggish S—d—w—ck winks his eye,  
Inscribing on my paper "4"!  
Or flings me down a Gulf to die  
Like ancient gaol-birds vile.

Now ghosts return of squandered hours  
When as I lolled in jasmine-bowers,  
And careless of book or desk,  
Perusing something Zolaesque  
Would charm the panting days on;  
Reproachful recollections throng  
Of social pleasures in the Long,  
Of hazel eyes which it was wrong  
For reading men to gaze on.

O ye two chairs of wattled rush  
Ensclosed behind the laurel-bush  
At Mrs. Prim's *al fresco* dance  
In June, remember ye perchance  
How close ye came together!  
Ye scissors that I treasure still,  
Ye wrought a very venial ill  
In poaching hairs upon that hill  
'Mid purple-tufted heather.

Alas! alas! Is this the mind  
Of one who leaves all joys behind?  
Is this the mood in which to tease  
The Bacchæ of Euripides?  
The *Œdipus Tyrannus*?  
Proud-prancing *Æschylean* words?  
Terse Tacitus? The Frogs? The Birds?  
V.L.'s by shoals? N.B.'s by herds,  
Invented to unman us?

O Barber, bare this burning brow!  
Round it, my towel, nestle thou!  
Shed thine effulgence, midnight oil!  
Thou coffee-kettle, haste to boil!  
(Be ye inscribed, my cuffs!)  
Ye Moderators all, beware,  
Dread what the desperate can dare!  
Then, d——d be he who first cries "Spare,"  
Come on, ye fell Macduffs!

Even here we have the intrusion of blatantly mechanical humour in the last line; and it riots through the semi-political skits which open the volume.

Edward FitzGerald.

*Notes for a Bibliography.* By Col. W. F. Prideaux.  
(F. Hollings. 6s. net.)

In the spring of last year Col. Prideaux contributed to the columns of *Notes and Queries* certain "Notes for a Bibliography of Edward FitzGerald." These, with some additions, were issued later in the year, in pamphlet form, for private circulation, only fifty copies being printed. They now reappear, recast and augmented, in the form of a little bound volume of eighty-eight pages, published by Mr. Frank Hollings, of Great Turnstile, Holborn. The booklet is one which all true devotees of FitzGerald will hasten to acquire. Even the possessors of the privately

printed "Notes" will not be able to resist the fascination of the present issue. And, first of all, because of the said augmentations. "Notes" of this sort are among the things that grow. New things come to light; the bibliographer has further opportunities, and hastens to avail himself of them. This is what Col. Prideaux has done. The notes on the Rubaiyat editions of 1859 and 1872 have been expanded with much advantage to the reader. Of the latter edition Col. Prideaux says: "In the history of what is sometimes called the 'Omarian Cult' it is of importance, because it was not till after its issue that it first dawned upon the reading and thinking classes of the time that a new star had arisen in the literary firmament." Other additions have been made in the way of useful and interesting foot-notes. The recasting of the text is a further boon. The "Notes" are now arranged under the headings of "Separate Works," "Posthumous Works," and "Contributions to Books and Periodicals." This is a distinct help. As in last year's pamphlet, the bibliographer ignores the American editions of FitzGerald's works, and contents himself with bare references to only the chief biographical memoranda and critical comments which have grown up round the name and fame of FitzGerald. A bibliographer has a right to limit his own field of inquiry; but it is to be hoped and expected that, in the respects named, Col. Prideaux's successors will repair his deliberate omissions. Already the biography and criticism of FitzGerald has assumed fairly large proportions. One may or may not regret this; but facts are facts, and the bibliographer must do his duty—he cannot shirk it, even when it is most unpleasant. By way of a *bonne bouche*, Col. Prideaux reprints, as an appendix, and by permission of Mr. Aldis Wright, the little known notes on Crabbe's "Suffolk" which FitzGerald contributed to the *East Anglian* and *Notes and Queries*, and which have not till now been reprinted in this country. These, obviously, are very welcome, as an agreeable supplement to the *Miscellanies* (Macmillan). Lastly, there is the pictorial frontispiece—a reproduction, in photogravure, of the sketch of FitzGerald by Charles Keene owned by Mr. Bain, of the Haymarket, and reproduced with his consent. This presents only a back view of its subject, but it helps, nevertheless, to bring the man before us—within limits—in very graphic fashion. The typography of the present volume is all that could be desired. The paper is good, and the binding is neat, not gaudy. Author and publisher may both be congratulated.

## Other New Books.

ALFRED THE GREAT: ENGLAND'S  
DARLING.

BY ALFRED AUSTIN,  
POET LAUREATE.

It speaks better for the patriotism than for the literary taste of England that this dramatic narrative (as its author explains it to be) should have reached a fifth edition, and be thought worth a cheaper reissue. For, regarded as a narrative in dialogue, as Mr. Austin tells us we should regard it, and dismissing all discussion concerning the legitimacy of such a form (which may be thought settled by Mr. Kipling's prose work, *The Story of the Gadsbys*), it is a very languid performance. From the poetic standpoint there is a preponderance of semi-prosaic or altogether prosaic language and conventional imagery. Once Mr. Austin indulges in such carelessness as "the sinewy curve of each fresh keel." Can a keel be sinewy (*i.e.*, muscular)? Or did the Laureate mean "sinuous"? When he would be bold, he talks of Saxon kings "with Woden's thunder moaning in their veins." An unhappier instance of daring which "falls on the other side" it would be hard to quote. A man may have lightning in his veins, for lightning is a fluid, swift and



fiery like eager blood. But thunder is mere sound, and a man whose blood should sound like thunder would signal his approach a mile off. There is no correspondence in nature to excuse the singularly misguided and ludicrous image. Yet Mr. Austin is a craftsman and a man of talent. There are one or two happy lyrics, and many passages which capture a certain impressive poetic eloquence, deserving admiration. Occasionally there are lines of true poetry, in a minor and not very noteworthy degree. As a whole, it is clever rather than inspired work, which certainly does not deserve the hasty contempt that some have poured on it. But the limpness of the poem as an organism forbids us to call it a success. (Macmillan. 2s. 6d. net.)

## THE POEMS OF SCHILLER.

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY E. P. ARNOLD-FOSTER.

It was a bold task indeed to translate the whole of Schiller's non-dramatic poems. We admire the zeal which dictated such an effort; but it is impossible to say that Mr. E. P. Arnold-Foster has given us more than the "tolerably faithful rendering" which is all he lays claim to. Of Schiller's poetry there is no suggestion in these dry bones. Compare, as an example, Mr. Arnold-Foster's version of the *Dithyramb* with Coleridge's. The later version is more faithful, but it is shudderingly prosaic beside the spirited lines of Coleridge. The first lines are enough:

Take my word for it  
That the gods never  
Wander alone.

How conversational is this, when you see how Coleridge has put it:

Never, believe me,  
Appear the Immortals,  
Never alone.

Lack of elemental poetic taste has, we fear, made this laudable and painstaking effort fruitless. The hexameters are especially terrible—as is the way of English hexameters. (Heinemann.)

## PICTURES OF WAR.

BY JOHN STUART.

In reprinting his letters from South Africa to the *Morning Post* Mr. John Stuart says: "I knew that the ground of impressionist description would be covered by the late Mr. George Steevens, to my mind the greatest of all war correspondents. He could see as much as a whole General Staff put together, and had a marvellous power of remembering incidents in the order of their occurrence. . . . I determined, therefore, to adopt a conversational style, only departing from that style when the gravity of the subject made such a departure desirable. And I tried to write as if I were talking in a London club to a soldier, a South African resident in London, who would appreciate certain local information, and to a man who would be attracted by interesting personalities and interesting anecdotes." The result is an interesting and always lively narrative. The book is belated, of course, as books and belatedness go nowadays, but its merits are the same. We cull one passage which speaks for itself:

We cantered along till we came to a steepish hill, and during its ascent the Queenslander tried to quote poetry. It is a national habit among Queenslanders. They know Lindsay Gordon by heart; they indulgently admit that Whyte Melville is nearly as good as he; they have planked their reputation on "The Man from Snowy River," and every district has a few dare-devils who, in the intervals between hard riding, hard drinking, and hard flirtations, compose really respectable jingles of rhyme, which first they show to the girl of the moment. Then they read them, after the billy and the damper, to a rather more critical circle of men, who are prepared to back their criticisms with their fists. Finally they send them to the local newspapers, and if they be at all good Australia rings with the verses for a week or a month.

One night during the after dinner yarning I owned to a surprised Queenslander that I had never read "The Man from Snowy River." For one brief, painful moment he hovered on the verge of apoplexy. But in less time than the telling takes he had pulled himself together, and in fifteen seconds he was reciting the verses at an easy hand gallop. And I know a dozen Queenslanders who could do the same.

(Constable. 6s.)

## GLORIES OF SPAIN.

BY CHARLES W. WOOD.

Mr. Wood is a traveller of the "indefatigable" order, and we believe this is not his first book on Spain. His *In the Valley of the Rhine* is fresh in our recollection. He is a gossiping and picturesque writer of travels, and you know one of his books at sight by their multitudinous tables of contents and their rather florid illustrations. To this volume there is no preface. You plunge at once into an infinity of detail, anecdote, "things seen," descriptions, criticisms. We like the old-fashioned miscellany of chapter-contents. As thus: "Chapter I. On Calais quay—At the Customs-house—A lady of the past—Ungallant examiner—Better to reign than serve—Paris . . . Chapter V. A Girona senora—Grace and charm—Lord of creation—Morning greeting—Arcades and ancient houses—Conscription—Streets of steps . . . Chapter VI. Beauties of age—Apostle's doorway—How the old bishops kept out of temptation . . . Chapter XIII. Barcelona—H. C.'s anxiety—Mutual salutes . . ." And so on. About such a book there is either very much or very little to be said. Space permits us to say only a little. Mr. Wood knows his subject, and everything interests him. Consequently he interests. But his is the pedestrian vivacity of other days. We dip at random—all dipping here is at random. The Ruins of Poblet:

"Then you don't believe the legend?"

"Not I, señor. I believe much more in the jovial times the old abbots indulged in. At least we have a capacious refectory and inexhaustible wine vaults to prove what fine banquets they had in the Middle Ages. We have come down to poor times, in my opinion. The world in general seems very much what this monastery is—a patched-up ruin."

"If the world were only half as beautiful," said H. C., "we should spend our years in a dream."

"It would not be my sort of dream, señor," returned the old guardian drily. "I have been here for twenty years, and confess I would give all the ruins in the world for a good and gay back street in Madrid or Barcelona. To you, señor, who probably come from the great cities of the world and mix with gay crowds—well, I daresay you think this paradise. To me it is a dreary wilderness."

Mr. Wood sees the world much as William Howitt did, and he has Howitt's incapacity for growing weary of sight-seeing. But he has not Howitt's aroma of style, nor the flavour of Howitt's Quakerly reservations and complaisances. A very good gift-book, all the same. (Macmillan. 10s. net.)

## THE UMBRIAN TOWNS.

BY J. W. AND A. M. CRUIKSHANK.

This volume of the "Historical Guides" series, initiated by the late Mr. Grant Allen, is quite excellent in its way. You must not look to it for what Mrs. Meynell has called "the spirit of place"—the elements differentiating one town from another, and making it a living, recognisable individuality, an organism distinct as any man or woman of our acquaintance. It is an historical guide, and approaches the Umbrian towns as archaeological "finds," palimpsests of history. But from this standpoint it is well and even lovingly done. The little *résumé* of Umbrian history which begins the book is written with no less intelligence than if it were destined for a manual of history; and makes the point (in effect) that the establishment of Italian republics during the feudal decline was the reversion of the Latins to

the old Latin municipal idea, held down by the superimposed feudalism of barbarian conquerors, against which it was constantly struggling. A type of the whole book is the treatment of the Church of S. Francesco in Assisi. The course of Umbrian art is carefully sketched, and the frescoes are treated according to the sequence of that historical development, not in their mere order of occurrence. Each fresco is labelled (so to speak), and the more important described and elucidated, with all necessary collateral information. It is a book interesting in the library no less than the tourist's pocket. (Grant Richards. 3s. 6d. net.)

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF  
RIVON.

By CECIL HALLETT.

"A short history of the church and a description of its fabric" is the sub-title of this book. For its style—well, take this casual passage:

The great window in the central compartment is one of the finest examples of geometrical tracery, if not one of the largest windows, in England. It is over fifty feet high, is twenty-five feet wide, and has seven lights. Of these the three at either end are comprised under a sub-arch, in the head of which are three cheque-foiled circles, while the central light of the seven is surmounted by an arch, not so high as its neighbours, but impaling upon its acute point a huge circle which fills the head of the window, and contains six trefoils radiating from the centre. The arch of this superb window is rather acutely pointed and richly moulded, and has two very slender shafts worked on the stones of either jamb, with foliage on their capitals. Just above the ground below this window there may be observed in the wall one of the many architectural puzzles in which the cathedral abounds, a half-arch, rising towards the right and filled with masonry, except at the right side, where is a narrow opening that runs in for a few feet. A string course continued from the sides of the aisles passes below the three windows and round the buttresses, which are further relieved at a little height above it by a set-off.

This is "one of the many architectural puzzles in which" the book abounds. It may be superlatively accurate, but to the general reader an elementary treatise on liquid air (for example) would, comparatively, be fascinating. For the scientific expositor does explain his terms as he proceeds. In other words, Mr. Hallett is too severely technical and dry-as-dust for all but architectural students. Yet the book has the outward guise of a popular account; and Ruskin has shown how architecture can be made attractive. Mr. Hallett has given a careful and valuable synopsis of the cathedral and its history; but was it necessary to revel in technicalities as he undoubtedly does? We hope not, if architecture is ever to become a matter of general interest in England. (Bell. 1s. 6d. net.)

THE "ARROW" WAR WITH  
CHINA.

By CHARLES S. LEAVENWORTH

Those who know China are absolutely certain that the present lull is only temporary, and that hostilities will break out again in a few months, exactly as they did last year. In their dealings with European nations the Chinese seem to forget everything and learn nothing. The history of each recurring dispute with China is simply a repetition of those which have gone before; the details differ, but the main facts remain exactly the same. This is very clearly shown in the book before us, *The "Arrow" War with China*, a useful little volume which tells the history of the wars and negotiations with China from 1856 to 1860. The real cause of the conflict was the "City Question," or the right of entry into Canton, and of direct official intercourse with the authorities there, but the ostensible reason for hostilities was the insult to the British flag which the Chinese perpetrated by boarding the lorcha *Arrow*, hauling down the Union Jack, and arresting the native crew.

The question of the ratification of the Treaties at Peking was the next cause of dispute, and the war went north.

The capture of the Taku forts, the imprisonment of Mr. Parkes and Mr. Loch, and the capture of Peking followed, and need only be referred to, but a delightful specimen of bland Chinese impudence will be worth quoting. Mr. Bruce, the British Minister, had gone north to make peace and demand indemnities after the war, and the Chinese had so little sense of the real facts of the case that they sent him the following message in answer to what was really an ultimatum:

The [English] despatch written on this occasion is, in much of its language, too insubordinate and extravagant for the Council to discuss its propositions more than superficially. For the future the British Minister must not be so wanting in decorum. The above remarks will have to be communicated by the Commissioner to the British Minister, whom it will behove not to adhere so obstinately to his own opinion, as so doing he will give cause to much trouble hereafter.

The reply was the taking of Peking. Truly nothing changes in China, and this little book is but another witness-stone on the ever-increasing pile of evidence. (Sampson Low. 3s. 6d. net.)

Prescott's great work, *The Conquest of Mexico*, has now been before the public for nearly sixty years. Its inclusion, in a three-volume edition, in the Bohn Libraries, is welcome, the more so because it is here accompanied by an introduction written specially for this edition by Mr. George Parker Winship, who, in a few competent pages, points out the weaknesses in a work of vast success and surpassing interest. Written with laborious care and art, and following the successful *Ferdinand and Isabella*, the *Conquest* was a great success, and, as Mr. Winship says, it has remained the standard authority for one of the most fascinating episodes in American history. Prescott was not a "scientific" historian, of course; and, beyond this, he lacked personal knowledge of Spanish and Mexican character. Hence, although his documentary facts are nearly always right, his interpretations are sometimes less satisfactory. "He probably never saw an American Indian," says Mr. Winship, but concludes his strictures with the remark: "Read as fiction, but as fiction very true to the facts, no one need ever regret the hours spent with Prescott's romance of Cortes, the conqueror of Mexico."

A great deal has been written here and there, and from time to time, about the childhood of Queen Victoria, but in *The Childhood of Queen Victoria*, by Mrs. Gerald Gurney (Nisbet, 6s.), we have a whole book, carefully compiled and well illustrated, devoted to the upbringing of the Princess Victoria from her birth to her twelfth year. Mrs. Gurney has been industrious; she has "waded through" many volumes, "each of which yielded perhaps but one tiny anecdote or remark." She has been assisted, too, by some of the late Queen's tutors and guardians. The result is a full and readable record. We should have preferred more illuminating page-headings than the names of places and palaces, as "Kensington, 1828 and 1829"; but this is a trifle. The description of Queen Victoria in the preface as "perhaps the greatest sovereign the world has ever known" has in it that amiable lack of the sense of proportion which seems to be inseparable from royal biographies.

Messrs. Macmillan send us a new edition of Mr. James Lane Allen's story, *A Kentucky Cardinal* (6s.), illustrated by Mr. Hugh Thomson. Do many remember the pretty personal dedication of this book: "This is to her from one who in childhood used to stand at the windows of her room and watch for the Cardinal among the snow-buried briars"? Mr. Thomson's drawings are quite bewitching.

A second edition of *The Evolution of Sex* ("Contemporary Science Series," 6s.), by Professor Patrick Geddes and J. Arthur Thomson, is issued by Mr. Walter Scott.



## Fiction.

*The History of Richard Calmady: a Romance.*  
By Lucas Malet. (Methuen. 6s.)

WHEN you see Richard Calmady sitting at table he is an Apollo. His splendid head, his strong, clear-cut face, which has all that gallant beauty which comes only to the children of true lovers, his broad shoulders and noble carriage, all mark him clearly as a man among men. But see him stand upon the ground, the hideous deformity in his stature allowing his long arms almost to touch the floor, see the grotesque shuffle which is his laborious substitute for a walk, see him even sitting—when once the concealing table is removed and those legs ending at the knee are disclosed in all their ghastly rigidity—and the Apollo is at once forgotten, and he becomes merely one of those repulsive freaks of a country fair with whom he himself could not fail to recognise his relationship. And the very clear distinction of these two impressions, scarcely ever confused, which are produced by his physical personality, is characteristic of his effect as a literary character. The reader never sees him all at once. The table may be there to conceal his legs, and one's admiration may be concentrated on the Apollo; or the deformity may obtrude itself on the view, and one can think of nothing else. Richard is either one or the other, never a combination of the two. And the consequence is that he does not end in being a very real person.

The artistic justification of Richard and his deformity is, in fact, not himself, but his influence upon others, and especially upon the opposite sex. He is himself more or less of a dummy, an ingeniously but rather morbidly contrived prism by which all the many colours in that very subtly blended spectrum, a woman's sexual personality, may be ascertained, decomposed, and separately set forth. Many women are successively put under the lens and subjected to the experiment. There is Clara, the housemaid, who nursed the young dwarf in his youth, and wept when he resolved that he was old enough to have a valet. There is Mrs. Chifney, the trainer's wife at the stables, who also wept—simple soul—because she thought he had a face with the resignation of an angel. There is little Lady Constance Quayle. She, too, wept when Richard released her from the engagement of marriage into which she had been forced by her relations. But the three important patients, the three characters which give the book its claim to be called real and vivid and alive, are Katherine Calmady, Helen de Vallorbes, and Honoria St. Quentin. In these three persons the author shows with very great skill the effect of the deformity on the perfect mother, the perfect sensualist, and the perfect virgin.

It is difficult to say which of the three studies is the most admirable. In all the author shows a subtlety, a frankness, and a tact which are insufficient to conquer one's distaste for the morbid instrument which has been chosen as the key to these women's hearts. Moreover, all the three are drawn with an instinctive sympathy which is quite lacking in the portrait of the man, and which shows, even if we did not know that "Lucas Malet" is the pseudonym of Charles Kingsley's daughter, that the book is written by a woman.

Perhaps of them all, Katherine Calmady, Richard's mother, is the finest. Pure with that purity of one who has once sounded love to its depths and, that love once lost, prefers rather to remain ever afterwards chaste in the memory of the past than accept any second best in the opportunity of the present, she walks through the book almost with a majesty, at any rate with that calm dignity of motion which in Richard's eyes distinguished her so clearly from other women in a crowded room.

The second of the three women, Helen de Vallorbes, Richard's evil genius, if she is certainly not a pleasant character, is scarcely less real, except in a few moments of crude melodrama, than Katherine Calmady. With the

artistic temperament's capacities and limitations in emotion, but with no more sentiment or morality in her view of life than to take the most enjoyment out of it, she ends in only developing that side of human character which leads to passionate sensualism. She is cruel—she was the child who laughed at Richard's infirmity—calculating in her pleasures, and with all the subsequent repulsion for the objects of her desires, which is the curse of ignoble passion. To her the grotesquely-deformed Richard becomes a subtle attraction. She begins by inspiring him with love, and ends by degrading that love to lust. The character is melodramatic at times, as when she is dressed in a "flowing, yet clinging silken garment of turquoise, shot with blue purple and shimmering glaucous green." And the chief incident in her amorous relations with Richard is described with quite unnecessary elaboration.

Beyond these three characters of the book nothing else and nobody else matters. Richard does not matter; he is a dummy or a shadow. It is, perhaps, just as well, for if one began to consider this short-legged hero seriously he would very soon become ridiculous. Cyrano de Bergerac had to do a good deal of laughing at himself to maintain his heroic position in relation to his audience, but even he was only grotesque as a lover; he was not grotesque as a man and a warrior. The minor characters do not matter; they are not drawn with originality or comedy, and they tend to become wearisome. The melodramatic absurdity of some of the scenes does not matter, although that of the clergyman, Julius March, discovering the old family legend in the library while the dwarf in the Velasquez picture opposite seems to grin at him through the growing darkness is absolutely Corellian in its obvious luridness. The whole idea of this explanation of Richard's deformity by legend is unworthy of Lucas Malet; it should be left to the *Bow Bells* Novelle. The unreality of some of the dialogue does not matter, although it frequently includes curiously unconvivial words, like "casement" and "greensward," and a speech by the old doctor, on page 404, reads exactly like a schoolboy's essay, and quite unlike anything that any human being could have said in talking. Nothing matters, in fact, except that Lucas Malet has drawn three very real portraits of three very different, but all interesting, women. And, if we regret the rather grotesque figure which is made to assist in the development of these three characters, we can forgive the author for the truth and humanity of the chief characters.

*The Wooing of Grey Eyes.* By Riccardo Stephens.  
(Murray. 6s.)

THERE is a certain kind of melodramatic story which Mr. Stephens writes extremely well—such a story, for instance, as *Mr. Peters*, which was so good that one wonders why it did not have a more marked success. Now, *The Wooing of Grey Eyes* is melodramatic enough in all conscience, but it lacks the qualities which distinguished the earlier work; the characterisation is cruder, the situations more forced, the construction, one is inclined to say, amateurish. That the lady called Grey Eyes should have been wandering about Hawksheugh, and there have met Jim Dalrymple, is, perhaps, likely enough, but that her villainous husband, who is also Jim's cousin, and supposed to be dead, should be wrecked outside Hawksheugh and be rescued by Jim is a coincidence quite unworthy of Mr. Stephens's ingenuity. Further, the writing of the story is unequal; at first it is too slangy, later it is overdone with what approaches fine writing. The rest of the volume is made up of seven short stories, all good, and one or two excellent in their kind. That, for instance, called "The Little General," which deals with some experiences of a Roman Catholic priest in an Edinburgh slum, has both humour and effective pathos. Mr. Stephens evidently knows these people, and about them he writes with a sureness of touch which carries conviction.

*From the Land of the Shamrock.* By Jane Barlow.  
(Methuen. 6s.)

THE charm of all primitive, homely things grows as the complexities of life increase, and stories dealing with the lives of village people, when not unbearably tragic, have a strong and half-tender fascination. Among this simpler society, the demands on the whole are so touchingly little, the humour is so shrewd, the pathos so profound and genuine. Life is set in such close proximity to nature and to natural things, that the fatigue of civilisation falls like a burden off one's shoulders as one reads. *From the Land of the Shamrock* is a collection of Miss Barlow's peasant sketches, all fragrant of a deep poetic feeling, and at the same time full of delicious and childlike humour, the humour of the Irish people. The entire book exhales the atmosphere of delightful people—the people who are brave and content upon very little; the people who, for all their dirt and illiterateness, have so much to teach the cultured.

### Notes on Novels.

[These notes on the Week's Fiction are not necessarily final.  
Reviews of a selection will follow.]

NEW CANTEBURY TALES. BY MAURICE HEWLETT.

A Prologue and six "New Canterbury Tales," dedicated to Mr. Frederic Harrison "with sincere respect." Five have appeared in English and American magazines, the sixth, Dan Costard, "kept his story to himself." This is Mr. Hewlett's manner of introducing them: "Here, then, you have the tellers of these new Canterbury Tales: the Lady Prioress of Ambresbury; Master Corbet the Scrivener of London; Dan Costard the Prioress' Confessor; Smith the Shipman of Hull; Captain Brazenhead formerly of Milan; and Percival Perceforest, who was born in Gloucester. The first day brought them to New Alresford, the second to Waverley Abbey, the third to Reigate on the side of the hill; the fourth to the Abbey of Boxley in Kent; and the fifth to Christchurch, Canterbury. Now, then, *Pierides*." (Constable. 6s.)

DESPAIR'S LAST JOURNEY. BY D. CHRISTIE MURRAY.

The story of Paul Armstrong's life—told by himself—in a desolate spot in the Rocky Mountains, where he, his ill-ordered career behind him, has just arrived to live the life of a Solitary. "You have made a hideous muddle of things," he said to himself, "a hideous muddle. Nothing to fear, for everything has happened." He asks the station-keeper if he has any whisky. The answer is "Yes." Upon which the Solitary remarks: "It's not unlikely that I may offer you ten dollars for a drink—twenty—thirty—an hundred. . . . If you allow yourself to be persuaded to give me so much as one teaspoonful, no matter when or why, I'll shoot you next day." Then follows the account of his life—four hundred pages of strong writing. (Chatto. 6s.)

THE SECRET ORCHARD. BY AGNES AND EGERTON CASTLE.

The scene is laid in France. The book opens at the Chateau de Fitzroy, "this golden month of September, this golden hour of the afternoon." The company is aristocratic, and the style and manner of telling the story is of the easy, luminous character that we associate with the authors of *The Bath Comedy*. The pages are peppered with dukes, marquises, ladies' sweetmeat names, and other ornate decorations. (Macmillan. 6s.)

THE FOLLIES OF CAPTAIN DALY.

BY F. NORREYS CONNELL.

"Zooks, that's a rakehelly cornet on the bay." The speaker was a former Duke of York, the period one autumn day when "he and an allied Anglo-German army were being

hustled across a Dutch river by seventy thousand breechless Frenchmen." But the hero is the gallant Captain Daly of the Horse Grenadiers. His exciting adventures are here set forth. (Richards. 6s.)

THE DIVA.

BY ANNIE THOMAS.

A quick, brightly written story of modern life, one of the chief characters being Captain M'Kay, who "had displayed courage, endurance, the keen powers of observation of a scout, and all the other fine, manly qualities a soldier should possess under Kitchener of Khartoum." The opening chapter finds the scout in "Lady Betty Pottinger's cosy little home in Green-street." On page 44 the Transvaal President delivers his "insolent and extortionate ultimatum." But that is by the way. Comedy is the note of the story. (John Long. 6s.)

THE JUST AND THE UNJUST.

BY RICHARD BAGOT.

A long, leisurely, serious story by the author of *Casting of Nets*. Hugh Lester, a younger son, through a series of deaths, succeeds to an earldom and forty thousand a year. The Earl married, but there was another lady with whom he had "maintained for some years past a *liaison* which showed no signs of wearing itself out." Mr. Bagot is an industrious writer. His readers need leisure. (Lane. 6s.)

THE LITTLE SAINT OF GOD.

BY LADY FAIRLIE CUNNINGHAME.

"There is material," says the author in the preface, "for half-a-dozen histories, and for a score of romances, in the adventures of the great leader of the Chouans, and of the Chouans themselves." This, then, is the story of the career of the Marquis de la Rouerie, the Chouan leader. The author claims for *The Little Saint of God* (she was the Chouan leader's beloved) that it is true, not in general outline only, but in almost every detail. (Hurst & Blackett. 6s.)

MASTER OF MEN.

BY E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM.

A pleasant story, with dramatic situations. It opens with a picture of Enoch Strone, foreman of Dobell's engineering works, bicycling home to a cottage he has built on a hill, where he can enjoy his books and nature in solitude. The Vicar calls upon him. Strone is rude, announcing that he is not a Christian, and that he doesn't believe a word of the Bible. But the Vicar is a bookman. He has a first edition of the *Sundering Flood*—and—Strone offers him a cup of tea. The Vicar was "amazed at the extent and depth of the other's reading." (Methuen. 6s.)

DEATH, THE SHOWMAN.

BY JOHN FRASER.

A strange medley of characters troop on the stage in the first chapter, including Mukhtir Bey, a Duchess, a Prince-Bishop, Schändli, Dolores, and Billa, an Indian ape. They are assembled in Mrs. Jack Cade's villa on the slopes of the Pusterthaal, for the purpose of giving "a drawing-room adaptation of Ober-Ammergau's solemn drama." Sir John Clanes, of the 2nd Life Guards, kindly undertook the part of the Beloved Apostle. (Unwin. 6s.)

A FRIEND WITH THE COUNTERSIGN.

BY B. K. BENSON.

A bustling story of the American Civil War, told in the first person, and accompanied by thrilling pictures and maps. One of them illustrates this incident: "Suddenly I began to take off my clothes—there in the tree. I must reverse my uniform, and must be a changed man before another Confederate should come my way." (Macmillan. 6s.)



## THE ACADEMY.

Editorial and Publishing Offices, 43, Chancery-lane.

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## A Dreamer of Things Impossible.

It is a singular and not very creditable fact that (as we have recently experienced) the tales of Edgar Allan Poe should be difficult to procure in their entirety—apart from complete editions of his works. It is the more regrettable and singular because these creations of genius touch on two sides two of the most popular modern schools of British fiction. Perhaps, indeed, this is the explanation of it: that the derivative has ousted the original. On the one side they have relation to the "detective" fiction of Dr. Conan Doyle, on the other they are in contact with the fantastic fiction of Mr. Wells. And between these two extremes is enthroned the very Poe—single, singular, with no predecessor and no authentic successor—unless it be the Stevenson of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. That central and—artistically—supreme class of his tales is difficult to describe, for, indeed, to describe it is to describe Poe himself. It has been the tendency of the modern romantic school, and of modern poets in general, to make themselves the heroes of their own work. Chateaubriand, Byron, Shelley, are instances that come at once to one's mind, and Byron had strong influence on the early Poe. But not Byron, not even the author of *Epipsychidion* and *Alastor*, hardly the author of *Atala*, had such a peculiar gift for arabesquing their own lives, for transcendentalising themselves, their happenings, and environment. In nearly all these tales of idealistic terror or beauty, of which the *House of Usher* is an example, the hero is Poe himself; while they constantly revolve round situations suggested by his own history. To consider Poe is to consider these tales, to consider the tales is to consider Poe.

It is significant that his family was alleged to be descended from the Irish family of Le Poer—one of the English Pale, it is true, but thoroughly Irished by long residence and intermixture. The spirit of his work is Celtic, if the form of his poetry be not, indeed, of direct Celtic origin. It is at least possible that he should have seen some of Mangan's poems, and that unfortunate Irish poet anticipates Poe's peculiar form so strikingly that it is difficult to believe the resemblance can be accident alone. Yet, hardly less singular than such a coincidence would be, is the coincidence between the lives of the two men—identical in drudgery, misery, poverty, bondage to stimulants, and not far from identical in their deaths. It is the visionary and ethereal spirit of Celtic romance which informs the central group of tales no less than the poems. The Celtic temperament would go far to explain Poe's weakness and strength; his brilliant caprice, his pride and passion, his literary quarrels, his lack of robust moral stamina, his ready enslavement to alcohol. The Celtic visionariness, with its lack of hold on earth, is further accentuated in him by the love of strange ways in reading which he shared with Shelley. The trait is constantly appearing—implicit or explicit—in his heroes. The hero of the scarcely-sane *Ligeia* relates:

With how vast a triumph, with how vivid a delight,  
 with how much of all that is ethereal in hope did I feel—  
 as she bent over me in studies but little sought, but less

known—that delicious vista by slow degrees expanding before me, down whose long, gorgeous, and all untrodden path I might at length pass onward to the goal of a wisdom too divinely precious not to be forbidden?

His quotations testify to the same thing. Glanville, Raymond Lully, Platonists like Henry King; by his citation of them he indicates the shadowy and mysterious authors whom he found congenial to his mind. But not to penetrate them, so far as we can see, with the zeal of the thinker. He loved, as he says himself, "those who feel rather than those who think." They give him dreams, suggest the stuff of tales or poetry; they are, indeed, to him, in no disparaging sense, "such stuff as dreams are made of." When a mind thus exalted, and of such natural development in one supermundane direction, applies itself to fiction, the result must needs be strange, almost monstrous. The pearl is an abnormality, the result of external irritation which provokes the precious excretion. These tales are no less precious and abnormal. One feels the reading of them as it were an unlawful pleasure, wrung from pain, disease, calamity, and the fruitage of delirium. The cost is too great, and the pleasure itself scarcely human. We said of *Ligeia* that it was hardly sane; we might have said thus of all the group to which we refer. Poe was conscious of this, and absolutely suggested—before Lombroso—a relation between madness and genius. For the hero of *Eleonora* surely speaks in the name of Poe:

Men [he says] have called me mad, but the question is not yet settled whether madness is or is not the loftiest intelligence, whether much that is glorious, whether all that is profound, does not spring from disease of thought, from moods of mind exalted at the expense of the general intellect. They who dream by day are cognisant of many things which escape those who dream only by night. In their grey visions they obtain glimpses of eternity, and thrill, in waking, to find that they have been upon the verge of the great secret. In snatches they learn something of the wisdom which is of good and more of the mere knowledge which is of evil. They penetrate, however rudderless or compassless, into the vast ocean of the "light ineffable."

This perilous doctrine is at least not far from descriptive of Poe's own genius. There was something uncanny about the man which forbade intimacy, almost approach. Of the hero (there is virtually but one) who paces through these tales in Poe's image you feel that no woman could live with him without going mad—or dying. And death, accordingly, is Poe's gift to all his women. The tales are vital with a wrongful vitality. They are told by heroes whose sensitive nerves have the preternatural acuteness of initial insanity; colour, sound, scent—every detail of description in their rendering becomes morbidly distinct to us, like the ticking of a clock in the dark. In the *House of Usher* this feature becomes conscious of itself; the hero hears the beating of a woman's heart while she stands without the closed door. Beauty and terror are alike portentous, "larger than human," like figures in a mist. The landscapes are pre-human, painted as with fire, and blinded with a light such as only streams from the fountains of the dreaming brain. The heroes live by choice in chambers out of nightmare, where curtains like molten silver fall in cataracts on carpets of burning gold, lighted by coloured flames which writhe from antique lamps, and perfumed from carven censers; on golden tapestries phantasmal figures waver in the rushing of a continuous wind. Amid such surroundings women of unearthly beauty, or the shadow of Poe's own child-wife, pass and die, and dying, give rise to tragedies of impermissible terror; the Red Death incarnates itself among the fated revellers; or a man flies through life pursued by the visible presence of himself. Beauty which cannot separate itself from terror, terror haunted by beauty, are the powers which rule this world of an opium-dream.

It is the deliberate turning away of a man from the normal; it is the obsession by the desire for better bread

than is made from wheat. When Poe theorises on landscape-garden ng, he avows his preference for the artificial style; but must have a "spiritualised" artificiality, an artifice which suggests the more than mortal. Yet this world at which the human heart aches becomes real while we read—there is the genius. The art is admirable in its sureness and delicacy. The imagination has seized these things of beauty and terror with more than the closeness of a poet—with the closeness of a dream; and there is no closeness, either to terror or beauty, so appalling as that of a dream. The scope is strange and narrow, but the mastership is absolute.

Yet the same man who can thus handle ideal horror and loveliness with the touch and arts of a poet is also, on another side, and within the limits of romance, one of the most convincing of realists. The man who wrote *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *The Masque of the Red Death* wrote also *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* and *The Descent into the Maelström*. For the dreamer was also a keen analyst and an amateur of science; and had his active days in youth. Mr. Wells himself has not combined romance and realism more startlingly than that feat is achieved in *Arthur Gordon Pym*. The seizure of the ship, and, above all, the whole episode of the storm and subsequent starvation, are done with amazing wealth and verisimilitude of imaginative detail. In reading the description of the escape from the Maelström, in the other tale we have mentioned, it is hard to realise that Poe, in all probability, never was in the neighbourhood of the Scandinavian seas. The little vivid touches seem the result of experience. For instance:

The boat made a sharp half-turn to larboard and shot off in its new direction like a thunderbolt. At the same moment the roaring noise of the water was completely drowned in a kind of shrill shriek—such a sound as you might imagine given out by the waste-pipes of many thousand steam-vessels letting off their steam all together.

Or again:

The rays of the moon seemed to search the very bottom of the profound gulf; but still I could make out nothing distinctly on account of a thick mist in which everything there was enveloped, and over which there hung a magnificent rainbow, like that narrow and tottering bridge which Mussulmen say is the only pathway between time and eternity. This mist or spray was no doubt occasioned by the clashing of the great waters of the funnel as they all met together at the bottom; but the yell that went up to the heavens from out of that mist I dare not attempt to describe.

The hackneyed comparison is doubly intrusive in the mouth of a Scandinavian fisherman; but otherwise the passage has an admirable air of eye-witness. The effect of the story, however, is not in single passages, in any cataract of "description," such as an inferior artist would have attempted, but is gradually built up from the accumulation of small matter-of-fact details. It is the very opposite pole of style and art from that in the first-mentioned group of tales; yet both are handled with equal power and effect. Perhaps in this group of tales the *M.S. Found in a Bottle* most directly anticipates the wonder-tales of Jules Verne and Mr. Wells. The material is not, like theirs, scientific; but the method strikes the note which all have since followed, according to their ability.

Finally, this wonderfully original artist has struck out and set the method for yet another class of tale—the "detective story" now represented by Dr. Conan Doyle. For, with Mr. Blatchford, we refuse to concede that the deductive method is undeveloped in Poe's tales of this class.

Certain applications of the deductive method Dr. Doyle has developed from his medical experience which are not to be found in Edgar Poe. But the deductive method itself is used by Poe with consummate skill. Dr. Doyle may also pride himself that in many cases he has trusted his mystery

entirely to the ingenuity of the problem; whereas Poe holds back the essential clues the better to effect his surprise. But the merit of the tales lies deeper than their display of analysis. It is the finished art of construction and narrative, bringing out the ghastly element or the thrill of excitement with exact *crescendo* of effect; the beauty of the exposition; and, over all, the style of a master, which can endow with immortality a thing in its essence so ephemeral as this species has shown itself in other hands. Let it be, if you will, that the great Dupin was the bungling pretender which the great Holmes, we know, once declared him to be. Yet Poe makes us believe in his greatness—and that is the thing which matters in art. Perhaps the truth is that Dr. Doyle, too, is an artist, and knows the artistic value of "bounce" in the right place. From the artistic standpoint, however, these latter tales—*The Murder in the Rue Morgue* and their kind—though they were the first to make Poe's fame as a tale-writer, will be the last to keep it. It is on the two former classes that his fame must chiefly rest—and rest securely.

## Things Seen.

### The Optimist.

HER cottage was to let, and she personally conducted me over it. Inside there were several beautiful pieces of furniture, and a quantity of mellowed ivories and bronzes; but the dirt and disorder were unpardonable. In the second sitting-room there were three small round tables, and place for little else. She explained that it was arranged in that fashion because one did not invariably feel like having meals on the same spot; and, moreover, that to take food with other people was a most disagreeable practice. Eating, at the best of times, was a gross performance, and to have conversation worth the name with a person thus occupied was an insult to thought. She pointed out the figured Japanese blue silk covering the walls of both rooms, and drew attention to the richness of its colour. The silk was grey with age, and here and there frayed into slits, showing a hideous paper behind.

In appearance she was herself a woman about forty-five, but lined with a literal net-work of nervous lines. She wore a short loose black cashmere jacket, buttoned down the front, but with two or three buttons missing, so that a Jaeger under-garment gazed out from the gap. She wore no corsets, and held a large pair of garden scissors in her hands from beginning to end of the interview. Her fingers were long and white, and on both sparkled a number of antique rings. The face was cold, intolerant, but predominately refined. As a girl she might have been very good-looking.

Passing into the kitchen and larder she explained that she had placed cupboards in single rows everywhere, so that each article of food might have its proper place: dairy produce—eggs, butter, milk—in one, meat in another, fruit in another, &c. She opened one door with a magnificent gesture, and on the same shelf I saw a dish of greasy-looking butter, the remains of a leg of mutton, some fruit, lard, and a piece of Gruyère cheese. It did not disturb her.

She escorted me into a wild-looking garden. "Here," remarked the owner of the cottage, "is my sward of peace. Here I had the lawn laid to be like velvet; or, rather, like the velvet loveliness of moss. In this one patch," and her eyes took in the appearance of seeing through substances instead of at them, "I allow no one to walk unless barefooted. It is my chance to nature, and must be approached reverently. The lawn," she added, perhaps obscurely conscious of the flowering mustard, "wants cutting, but you see I am hard at work, keeping order. It is all so clear in my mind that I can afford to take it easily. The mere doing the actual work is nothing when you have once got the finished picture in your head."



She went with me to the gate, and, as we shook hands in a side piece of garden—a perfect wilderness of weeds twined about untrimmed rose-bushes—she remarked moodily: “Action is always ridiculous—a tedious repetition of insignificant details. It checks imagination instantly, and imagination is the one thing the Lord gave us beyond the reach of money. We have the gratification of knowing that millionaires are incapable of purchasing it.”

I left her leaning on the gate. She looked harassed, but I have never been able to decide whether this lady was to be pitied as an eccentric, or envied for an astounding power of inward vision.

### The Traveller.

UNCLE TEDDIE put me in the train at Penzance, having arranged with the guard to paste a label, “For Ladies Only,” on the window. His instructions were precise. I was to speak to nobody. Then he left me. The next thing that happened was just the kind of thing that happens in sensational stories. The train was starting when the door was thrown open and a young man jumped in. He was in a state of wild excitement. For several minutes he remained with his head thrust out of the window, staring at the flying country. His body shook with emotion. I sat very quiet, feeling horribly nervous, wondering when the next stoppage would be, and how soon I could make up my mind to pull the communication cord. Suddenly he turned from the window and flung himself in the seat opposite mine. His eyes were extraordinarily bright, and clear, and curious. One hand clung to the window sash, the other clutched the cushion. He seemed to find the support necessary. All at once he asked, with a tremor in his voice as if half afraid of my reply, “Shall we go any faster?” I made some sort of answer that I tried to make coherent. He looked about him with the quick movements of a bird, and asked the inconsequent questions with which a lively child pesters its mother; but he demanded quick, intelligent answers. I was thankful to find that my replies seemed to please him, for, at the end of an hour, he beamed upon me and said: “Where are you going?” “Bath,” I replied. “I’m going to Bath,” he said jubilantly; “we shall meet there. I am so glad.” “But Bath is a large place,” I remarked. He coloured, and murmured: “Oh, Bath is a large place.” He was quiet for a little while, and then said: “Do you know I have never been in a train before. Never been in a train before to-day!” Against my judgment, I could not help saying, “How is that?” “There are no trains in Scilly. This is the first time I have ever been out of the island. How splendid trains are. I shall never get tired of trains.”

### Paris Letter.

(From our French Correspondent.)

M. OCTAVE MIRBEAU is impelled by a generous instinct, which is the root of Socialism, to scourge ruthlessly all existing states of things. That everything might be better not even the airiest optimist will deny. But there are limits to the Apostle’s freedom of speech, limits to his just accusations, and M. Mirbeau leaps over these limits with a revolting indifference to tact and taste. The abhorred institution of his nightmares is the bourgeoisie. It is a hate he shares with Stendhal and Zola, whose detestation of the bourgeois lies in diametrically opposite sympathies. Stendhal has a passion for the upmost, not merely upper, ranks of society. Princes, ministers, duchesses, and cardinals—these are his privileged favourites; a taste he has imparted to his disciple, M. Bourget. Zola, on the other hand, worships the people—the scientific workman,

the reforming dreamer. He, like M. Mirbeau, unjustly charges the unfortunate bourgeois with all the existing wrongs of humanity. On the fourth page of his unjoyous “*Vingt et un jours d’un Neurasthénique*” M. Mirbeau remarks that the “bourgeois classes are everywhere in a state of decrepitude, and their children, of impoverished growth in the putrid morass of marriage, belong already to the past.” Elsewhere he qualifies the bourgeois as *immonde*. Yet he has considerable talent if he could only be got to look upon life with a less jaundiced eye, and if he could accommodate his pity for the poor and oppressed to a juster appreciation of the oppressor. For assuredly it is not all rose-coloured virtue when we step below the rank of the bourgeois. Real Socialism should preach fraternity and not class hatred. M. Mirbeau is nothing if not “actual.” And so one of his pet aversions, the minister, M. Georges Leygues, appears on the scene at a fashionable watering-place in the Pyrenees, and is made to hold forth appropriately by the terrible caricaturist. The cruellest and cleverest portrait is that of the Marquis of Portpierre, the friend of the Duke of Orleans. As a satirist M. Mirbeau has no sense of humour, but is bitterly mordant. The marquis is a false *bon enfant*, of a perfidious joviality, an accomplished trickster who takes in everybody—friends, electors, tenants, and the poor. When he poses as Parliamentary candidate he dons blouse and cap, treats his electors, slaps them on the back, and calls them “mon brave.” His opponent is a poor devil of a teacher, in a worn, well-preserved frock-coat and tall hat long since past its prime. The marquis, by coarse jeers at the *miriflor*, drawing attention to his own humble attire in contrast with the teacher’s *habits de prince*, succeeds in getting him hissed and insulted. The picture is overcharged, according to the laws of caricature, but it stands out strong and striking. You see the man hateful, jovial, sly, dishonest, and *grand seigneur* in the modern acceptation of the definition in France to-day. Another biting satire is the illustrious painter in despair before the corpse of his adored wife, who hitherto has been his eternal model. “What is left him now that his beloved is gone?” Painting! He rejects the notion passionately. He has sacrificed the love of wife and child to art, and now he will break his palette, burn his brushes. “But little by little his eyes lost their expression of sorrow, and little by little his glance, a moment ago anguished and wet, had that concentration, that tension of all the visual forces which narrow the eyes of the painter in a ferocious moment when he finds himself in presence of a nature that interests him. He cried: ‘What tones, sacristi!’” In another instant he has seized his brushes and easel, and is lilting an old studio song as he paints for dear life the dead beloved. He has forgotten all but his work; and when the valet interrupts him to say that the “Pompes funèbres” are without, he exclaims: “What Pompes funèbres?” The valet with difficulty makes him understand that the undertakers are there for his wife, and that the model is a corpse. “And, gaily, with a schoolboy grimace on his lips, a grimace which brought back altogether the Bohemia he had once belonged to, he recommended: ‘Tell the undertakers that they have mistaken the house: it is in the next street.’ And he returned to his painting.”

This passion for reform of existing abuses by which the majority are made to suffer needlessly has induced M. Mirbeau to preface a book that might have been an important document, and which remains merely a futile plaint, *Un an de Caserne*, by Louis Lamarque. M. Mirbeau takes this book very seriously indeed, and congratulates the writer on having chosen such a subject rather than endow literature with more symbolic princesses or Scandinavian legends, or obscure and mournful verse, the despairs of love and death, or the revelations of the depths of the Anglo-Belgian soul. And this from M.

Octave Mirbeau, the discoverer of Maeterlinck, whom he introduced to the world as "the Belgian Shakespeare"! He tells us pompously that this is a book "lived," and "lived" it assuredly is; but how? Here is a youth of twenty-one who goes to barrack in the same tearful mood of a child of ten facing school and separation from his mother for the first time. If he were departing for the colonies for ever he could not weep more grievously over himself and call more feebly for his mother and his mistress. He sits before a mirror and watches the expression of his face, and gravely writes: "I wore so sad an air that many visages around me softened, and more than one glance was full of pity." Instead of telling us about general suffering, he invites us to weep with him as he sits at the window and thinks of the beloved, "his tender, unquiet, and so sweet love." When an author sets himself the legitimate task of writing a book of the kind, he should begin by putting his private sentiments under lock and key. We want to know the class of men he associated with, and how they fare; we want to see something of them, something of their officers and of their daily lives. But we are not in the least interested in M. Lamarque's sentimental troubles, which apparently consist of a temporary separation from a facile fair one who continues to write to him; and at twenty-one a youth ought to be able to leave his mother's skirts without clamouring for the universe to stand still and pity him. And even as a soldier he seems to have had a particularly easy time. He paid a *brosseur* to do his work. He had lodgings in the town, to which he was free to retire four hours a day. M. Mirbeau has wasted his indignation, and his preface is worthier a stronger case.

I was offered *Le Cœur dans la Main et l'Estomac dans le Talon* by a youth just returned from the regiment after his year's service. He told us it was hugely enjoyed by the whole regiment, and read aloud amid shouts of laughter as *une bonne blague*, a sort of French *Three Men in a Boat*. After M. Lamarque's weeping pages, I was curious to look at a volume that had kept a regiment at Caen in shouts of laughter. It delighted me to know that a French regiment could laugh, and that all the men were not condemned to sit at the window lamenting their mothers and their absent mistresses. As a specimen of French humour it would be impossible to find anything more deplorable. Even M. Lamarque was better employed than the soldiers who enjoyed this shocking and indecent drivel. We were many and all grown up, and most of us turning gray, around the poor lad who wished to impart his regimental hilarity to us, and the kindest word any of us could say to him was "C'est idiot." It is surprising how absent in the French is the schoolboy spirit. They seem incapable of conceiving such a thing as innocent fun. It is a thousand pities for the youth of the land.

H. L.

## A Second-Hand Catalogue.

MISS MILLARD'S catalogues have had their full share of attention of late, not only in the ACADEMY but elsewhere. Mr. Walter T. Spencer is as worthy of study. Mr. Spencer is the Dickens specialist in New Oxford-street, opposite Mudie's, whose window offers always rare editions of that author and also of Thackeray, Cruikshank, and (strange companion for these twain) Richard Jefferies. Mr. Spencer's new list, which reached me by post a day or so ago, is so remarkable that its fame must be at once diffused. It contains three unique items which the Boz Club ought to buy, but which will almost certainly make the Atlantic passage. These are a paper-knife, a pen, and a slate, once the property of Charles Dickens, and all vouched for.

Mr. Spencer is a critic, an enthusiast, as well as a dealer, and the core, the beating heart of the present catalogue, is his description of the emotions kindled in him by this

paper-knife. Here he rises to poetry. The second-hand bookseller is transfigured, a nimbus shines about his rapt brow, eloquence visits earth once more. A writer in last week's ACADEMY was pleased to disapprove of the glittering style: how, I wonder, would he describe Mr. Spencer's raptures? But this is the glowing passage:

In this catalogue will also be found CHARLES DICKENS' PEN (*which please see*). He generally wrote with a quill, an implement of such short life in those tireless fingers, that it was constantly being replaced. The Paper-Knife, however, besides being equally a "Right-Hand Tool," had an infinitely longer existence. It must [now he is warming] be saturated in every fibre with the electric personality of the Master. Now he has dallied with it, a sheet cut now and then, as he read with appreciative interest; now the quick nervous hand would slash open the leaves, as the hour of an appointment drew near. How often, I wonder, has he sat back in his chair, eyes half closed, musing, planning, holding levées of characters invisible as yet to any eye but his own, with this little instrument, dot-and-dashing cablegrams from Fancy-land, as the unwearied mind wove its wondrous patterns out of gossamer into groundwork for fictions which will be still more dear to English and to American men, women, and children a hundred years hence than they are even now.

This, I contend, is clever writing; almost brilliant. For it supplies the purchaser with precisely the suitable thoughts to accompany his bargain. Cannot you see him, this purchaser, in his home in the States, reproducing Mr. Spencer's fancies? conjuring up the right feelings? Mr. Spencer adds that he never had a Dickens' relic that he valued more highly than this, or parted from more reluctantly. Considering the emphasis which he lays upon his Dickens' worship one is surprised that he does part with it. Eighteen guineas!

Next, the pen. "Sacred to the memory of Charles Dickens . . . a relic worthy of being made an heirloom." This is a quill that was removed from the Master's desk immediately after his death. Mr. Spencer takes only a sip of Hippocrene in this connexion. His deep draughts are over; they stopped with the paper-knife, although that was only three guineas more. (But three guineas can command much rhetoric.) This is the burst of ecstasy reserved for the quill:

Of a literary man, what more intimate, close, or characteristic memorial could be suggested than the pen which conveyed to his world of readers his golden thoughts?

I ought not, I cannot say more:—I leave it to his legion of admirers, and only hope it may find a worthy and final resting-place, where it may interest thousands yet unborn.

Finally, also at fifteen guineas, we come to the Master's engagement slate; but by this time Mr. Spencer is cool again. For the slate no minstrel raptures swell. It is described with business-like exactness, the price is added, and there you are. But probably it will be in Illinois before Christmas.

The unique character of Mr. Spencer's list is by no means yet exhausted. Dickens may be his hobby, but his pen touches gracefully or informingly on many another writer, and his appraisements are curiously interesting. Thus, the prices of autographs are, as usual, illuminatively instructive. The signature to a letter "With affectionate greetings, Hall Caine," is five shillings—sixpence more than *The Eternal City* less discount. But what a treasure to paste in the cover! The transition from Mr. Caine to Miss Corelli (and *vice versa*) is always too easy: Mr. Spencer offers several letters from that lady to one Mr. Rashleigh, at varying sums, all higher than one would expect, or, in these times of Imperialistic income-tax, than one can stand. For a criticism of *The Gay Lord Quex*—with this terse and accurate judgment in it: "All that is degraded in tone on the stage is invariably well done"—£2 5s. is asked. What



can one not buy for forty-five shillings? Mr. Cook will take you to Lucerne and back for something like that. For an invitation to Stratford-on-Avon, 15s.; for an invitation to the theatre (not to *The Gay Lord Quex* one feels sure), 18s.; and for a note arranging to send the carriage to meet the gentleman, 18s. Says Mr. Spencer:

Now, I beg to call attention to the fact that Miss Corelli has always opposed an adamant front to the autograph-hunting-demon, and has baffled, as a rule, his most insidious attempts. These four letters are, every one, to be reckoned as prizes, by the body of genuine autograph collectors, which, while it will not grudge liberal prices for good letters, would never stoop to obtain them on false pretences.

I do not particularly desire any of this series; but I should not mind venturing a few shillings to have a sight of Miss Corelli's next letter to her friend, on the subject of traffic in private correspondence.

Let me conclude by quoting as a kind of postscript to the interesting *Tin Trumpet* article in the ACADEMY a week or so ago, the MS. epigram by Horace Smith which Mr. Spencer copies from a sheet of paper, dated Brighton, 1837:

Let this plain truth those ingrates strike  
Who still, tho' bless'd, new blessings crave,  
That we may all have what we like  
Simply by liking what we have.

V. V. V.

## Correspondence.

### The Lady of Riddles.

SIR,—The author of an interesting study of Mary Stuart in the ACADEMY (September 14) asks whether she was dominated by terror when Bothwell abducted her. He despairs of an answer, yet I think that an answer is possible. We know that along with Mary Maitland of Lethington was taken and carried to Dunbar. His position is mysterious: he had certainly been allied with Bothwell in the bond for Darnley's murder. On the other hand, he had not signed the bond of April 19, 1567, advising Mary to marry Bothwell, and he and Bothwell had usually been on hostile terms. Consequently we have evidence that Bothwell, just after the abduction, threatened to slay Lethington. Now, Sir James Melville, in his memoirs, with Drury, in a despatch of the moment, and Mary herself, in the memoirs of her secretary, Wall, all combine in saying that the Queen rescued Maitland, threatening Bothwell with extreme punishment if he touched Lethington. It would seem to follow that she was quite undaunted. On the other hand her action is not like that of a woman enslaved by a passion for her rough wooer. If she was neither terrified nor besotted by passion, her attitude is rather more of a riddle than ever; while, if Maitland did not know of the contemplated abduction—so dangerous to himself—it is just possible that Mary was equally ignorant.—I am, &c.,

ANDREW LANG.

### Mr. Pater's Style.

SIR,—After reading your remarks *re* Mr. Gwynn's *Daily News* article on Mr. Pater's style, I would suggest (if you can kindly allow me the space to do so) that those who are anxious to enjoy the charm of his writings should first apply themselves to Mr. Symonds's charming essay, "Walter Pater" (published by Leonard Smithers, 1897), in *Studies in Two Literatures*; then to "Walter Pater" direct, especially *The Child in the House*, *Imaginary Portraits*, *Appreciations*, and *Gaston de Latour*, that delightful, unfinished romance, wherein one can read of the road "like a white scarf flung across the land"; and, later, in that sweet land of "Peach

Blossom and Wine," how Gaston dallied for nine dreamy months with Montaigne and his young wife; and of the lingering, loving talks over books (of which Montaigne had a goodly store), of the quiet walks in the sun-kissed vineyards.

As Mr. Gwynn rightly says, these "Essays from the *Guardian*" are Pater's slightest words! but, being his, are interesting, if not representative and convincing.—I am, &c.,  
IPSWICH. T. E. JONES.

### "The Ordinary Commentator."

SIR,—The writer of a review entitled "The Snake in Literature," in pointing out what he considers is an omission of the "ordinary commentator" of Shakespeare, is himself at fault. Your reviewer says:

To the sloughing of the snake Shakespeare alludes in his famous line—

"When we have shuffled off this mortal coil."

It is not mentioned by the ordinary commentator, but is too obvious an allusion to have escaped notice.

I was myself under the delusion contained in the above paragraph until I read a very interesting article by Mr. H. Courthope Bowen, entitled "How to Study a Poem," which appeared some time ago in the *Educational Review*. Fortunately I have found the actual article, and am able to give the *verba ipsissima* of the writer:

A writer's vocabulary may contain obsolete words, unfamiliar words, and, most puzzling of all, familiar words used in an unfamiliar sense. In dealing with such matters the rapid impressionist, through his habit of catching at the meaning as a whole, may sometimes score a success—though not infrequently he goes hopelessly wrong. The laborious pedant, on the other hand, is almost sure to air his learnedness, and give us a derivation which hardly ever helps a child, and seldom anyone, except to justify the meaning when found. The question is not what the word meant originally, but what it meant to the writer when he used it. When our laborious friend once catches that idea he scores heavily. Let us take an instance—from "Hamlet":

"When we have shuffled off this mortal coil."

"That," says the rapid commentator, "means when we are dead." "Yes, quite so; but please explain the metaphor." "Well, evidently it is taken from the idea of a snake's sloughing his skin." "Not so fast," says the plodder. "Coil means skin? Perhaps." So we take down Mrs. Cowden Clarke's concordance, and find that "coil" is used twelve times in the plays; and in the eleven other cases the context shows clearly that it means *confusion*, *noise*—no idea of skin, wrappage, or curl of rope. "Shuffle" is used eight times; and in five of the seven other cases plainly means *to practise shifts or tricks—to do in a perfunctory way*; while in the remaining two the meaning is closely similar. One of our cases is from "Twelfth Night": "Oft good turns are shuffled off with such uncurrent pay" (i.e., thanks). So "shuffle off" means *to elude, to get rid of somehow*; and our original statement has nothing to do with snakes, but means *when we have got rid, in one way or another, of the noisy confusion of our human life*.

—I am, &c.,  
Coventry.

T. L. HUMBERSTONE.

### Answered.

SIR,—In answer to a correspondent's query in last week's ACADEMY, I am writing to say that the book containing a description of the Garden of Eden is Eliot Warburton's *The Crescent and the Cross*. I cannot give the publisher's name as I have it in the Tauchnitz edition only.—I am, &c.,  
LITTLEFIELD HOUSE, EXMOUTH. A. L. FERRAND.

## Our Weekly Competition.

### Result of No. 105 (New Series).

LAST week we offered a prize of One Guinea for the plot of a short magazine story. The result is not encouraging. A short story should deal with one incident and its ramifications. A volume would be needed to work out many of the plots submitted. And we would remind amateurs in general that life is not entirely composed of murders, suicide, and anarchist plots. We award the prize to Mr. W. B. Smith, 162, Adelaide-road, N.W., for the following:

When the Hon. Felix Foresite accepted the portfolio of Transport in South Cooksland colonials expected great things. He was a "live" man, and had to save their export trade. Their hated rivals in North Cooksland had cut them out in the Japanese market.

So he assembled all stockowners, and pooled their interests so cleverly that carcasses should be delivered at Yokohama to sell three halfpence a pound cheaper than their competitors. He bought six steamers, fitted them with freezing-chambers, and with engines giving two knots more than any North Cook boat.

When O'Shea, Premier of North Cooksland, read of these doings he sent for his nephew, who had been a ship's doctor, and therefore half a sailorman. He explained the dangers of this competition, and his nephew explained the use of ammonia as a freezing-agent and the properties of its gas. Both agreed that the first of the rivals reaching Yokohama would capture the trade.

The doctor took passage to Yokohama by the rival line, on the *Oharasi*. He ingratiated himself with all, especially the freezing-chamber engineer. The *Peter O'Shea* was sixteen hours behind when the *Oharasi* passed through the Heads into Yokohama harbour. As the *Oharasi* neared the wharf half the crew rushed on deck, and all the engine-hands. An escape of ammonia gas.

The engines were now without control; the captain steered the vessel twice madly round the harbour, cut down half-a-dozen sampans, and grazed through the Heads again to open sea. The gas worked off by degrees, but the *Peter O'Shea* had her cargo discharged first. The doctor dropped the key of the condensing-chamber into the water and winked.

Other replies are as follows:

A French peasant woman, during the Franco-Prussian War, finds a young wounded German scout. Moved by maternal compassion, and thinking of her only son, who, with his father, is absent in arms, she disregards the lad's nationality and nurses him back to convalescence. The tenderest bond of sympathy is formed between the two. While talking one day, she beseeches him to spare her son if Fate should ever bring them face to face, and shows him a photograph of the boy. The scout recognises it as that of his first victim, whose agonising face haunted him throughout his delirium. Unable to bear his position, he leaves the house without a word and hides in a wood, intending to make good his escape by night. Late the same evening the husband returns home invalided, and states that he found an enemy skulking round the house, and that, despite his disablement, he had killed him. He describes his victim. It was the scout. He produces a little gold rosary found in the dead man's pocket-book. It is the one the mother had clasped round her own boy's neck when he had set out.

[S. C., London.]

Hannah Peile is a dressmaker whose hours all the week are timed to the click of the sewing-machine, and whose Sunday's rest is in the quiet Baptist Chapel. Here, unconsciously, she learns to listen to the voice instead of the words of the young minister. In the front pew is always seated a girl of Hannah's class to whom money has given a superior position. One day her engagement to the minister is announced, and in Hannah this awakens a new, stinging consciousness. Time passes, and Hannah is chosen to make the wedding-dress, when she has to listen to those near confidences of woman to woman. The night before the wedding she takes the dress to the bride's house, who, for superstitious reasons, refuses to put it on. Hannah is present to do so, and while the other is upstairs hunting for coral beads the minister enters. The dress and the darkness deceive him. He advances with open arms—to discover his mistake, and reads the secret in Hannah's eyes. He hurriedly takes his leave, and when the bride returns the dress is lying in tempestuous folds on the table, and the little dressmaker has fled.

[E. C., Gravesend.]

The scene is laid in a village, where the actions of your neighbours and the advent of strangers form the only excitements. A mother and daughter inhabit a small house there, and strive, by continually starving the servant and a watchful economy in charities, to make a decent appearance. The result invariably leaves the local tradesmen with somewhat of a deficit. Into this society comes a young and wealthy novelist, whom the worldly-wise mother strives to ensnare into marrying her sordidly-minded daughter. The man, to whom a woman's disappointment is but a mere incident, more amusing than otherwise, sees through the artifice and flirts with her so desperately that both consider it a settled affair. They tell all their friends what

a rich man he is, and linger lovingly on the advantages of so gifted and wealthy a connection. The denouncement comes with the daughter reading a private letter in his room, where she finds that he has only used her as a copy to make the love-scenes in his novels more sincere and realistic.

[R. K. H., Epperstone.]

Major A—— is guardian to a young girl, Elsie S——, aged twenty years. On reaching the age of twenty-five she becomes heiress to a large fortune. The Major thinking that, all things considered, she will make an excellent wife for him, decides to propose to her; but not being sure of the legality of a guardian marrying his ward before she is of age, consults a young barrister friend of his, called Charles D——, carefully omitting to mention any name or give any clue to whom he really refers. Charles D—— assures him it is quite legal, and that a guardian may propose to his ward when and where he pleases. The barrister then takes his departure, and the Major sends for his ward, but she is nowhere to be found. In about two hours she returns, enters the Major's room and informs him she is engaged to be married, and wants his consent. "Who to?" inquires the Major, aghast. "Oh!" says Miss Elsie, "You know him well—he is a friend of yours—Charles D——. Will you give us your consent?"

[C.A., Howth.]

James Higson, a money-lender trading secretly under an assumed name, but known in good society, has lent money to Tretherfe: he has sued him, but cannot get paid, since the security he took proved worthless, and Tretherfe lives at home, and has no property Higson can seize. Higson hears Tretherfe has married and taken a house with new furniture: his solicitor being away, Higson *personally* puts the bailiffs in and sells all furniture in the house during Tretherfe's absence on honeymoon: subsequently various solicitors write claiming damages from Higson, the furniture sold being partly Mrs. Tretherfe's and partly her brother's, the latter having intended to live at the Tretherfe's house and having brought *his own* furniture there: the bailiffs also claim damages for expenses incurred owing to wrongful seizure. Higson's solicitor advises the claims are legal: Higson must keep out of Court to conceal his identity and avoid ridicule, so perforce pays heavy damages to Mrs. Tretherfe and brother, which more than cancel Tretherfe's debt. Later, Higson meets the Tretherfes at a dinner-party, where Mrs. Tretherfe (American, pretty, vivacious) tells the whole story. Higson (being *incognito*) has to join in the general laughter at his own discomfiture.

[E. W. H., Manchester.]

Amar flew down the Hill of Allen like a curlew, and was soon lost in the starry bog on his way to count the foemen at Shanavoola (the-old-milking-place). Little he guessed that Morla, the King's daughter, was the cause of his dangerous mission. Yet she had insisted on his being sent through girlish wilfulness, because her father had upbraided her for loving Amar. He returned pallid and bleeding, and, after delivering the numbers, fell dead. Under his harper's jacket were found two slips of elm-wood with these lines:

"Oh! were I a wood and thou, the night dark with my trees,  
How I should keep thee, and have thee, and hold thee,  
Here in my branches, here till the dawn!  
But I am not a wood, and thou art a queen lovelier than the night,  
For ever beautifully moving away to the music of my heart  
Beating in vain from dawn to dawn."

Morla went among the foemen disguised as a harpist, and having killed Amar's slayer, was stabbed on the spot. Sometimes in Glenaree (Glen-of-the-Kings) the bogmen hear a woman weeping at night, and snatches of a mournful, passionate singing; but many say it is the wind and the curlews.

[W. A. H. B., Kildare.]

Replies also received from: E. H. H., London; F. L. W., Bradford; H. V. S., London; P. C. F., Cambridge; R. D., London; F. H., Leigh-on-Sea; F. B. G., London; P. A. L., Rugby; J. P., London; G. N., Bristol; E. M. W., London; H. S., Corfe Castle; T. C., Buxted; A. M. B., Godalming; F. B. D., Torquay.

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Answers, addressed, "Literary Competition, THE ACADEMY, 43, Chancery-lane, W.C.," must reach us not later than the first post of Wednesday, October 2. Each answer must be accompanied by the coupon to be found on the third page of Wrapper, or it cannot enter into competition. Competitors sending more than one attempt at solution must accompany each attempt with a separate coupon; otherwise the first only will be considered. Contributions to be written on one side of the paper only.



